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The One Ring™
Roleplaying Game

Adventurer's Companion™

Fantasy Roleplaying in the World of The Hobbit™ and The Lord of the Rings™

Based on the novels by J.R.R. Tolkien

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Published by Sophisticated Games Ltd, 1 Andersen Court, Newnham Road, Cambridge CB3 9EZ, UK and Cubicle 7 Entertainment Ltd, Suite D3, Unit 4, Gemini House, Hargreaves Road, Groundwell Industrial Estate, Swindon, SN25 5AZ, UK

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- Introduction -

There is a forge that rests in a corner of a large smithy in the heart of the Lonely Mountain. A young Dwarf works the bellows for his father and uncle, who are content with their lot, pleased that their people have finally returned home to Erebor. But there is no peace in the young Dwarf's heart. Even when he takes his turn at the anvil, his hammer ringing, striking with all his might, he cannot dispel the disquiet that grows daily in his heart.

There is a Hobbit lass that wanders the banks of the river Brandywine, fingers trailing through the long grass. Her friends weave garlands of flowers and speak of going to market. She dreams of crowns forged from gold, set with precious gems, and the markets she wishes to see lie a world away, far to the east, beyond plains, mountains, and forests that she can barely imagine – but how she yearns to.

There is an Elf that sits in the crook of a large oak, which stands in solitary splendour in a glen in Northern Mirkwood. The Elf has watched the colours of the leaves of his beloved forest change and fall just over three hundred times. In his mind has grown a thought that he dare not speak to his friends and family, not yet: he would see more of the world and he does not think he will miss the turning of the leaves in the slightest.

There is a woman riding a mighty stallion across a windswept field beneath a bright sun. She laughs as her arrows easily find their marks, though she shoots from her horse's back, and does not bother to stop his headlong flight as she does so, for she was born to ride. Her father calls out his approval as she thunders past his campfire. For all his love, though, she knows that many in Rohan do not feel as he does, and do not entirely approve of the wild maiden she has become. It matters not. Her path is hers to choose and she knows that one day it will lead her north, to the fields her people knew long ago.

What these four have in common, though they may not all know it as yet, is that they are all destined for lives of hardship and sacrifices, torments and triumphs, glories and tragedies...

The Lives of Adventurers

The *Adventurer's Companion* brings a wealth of new ideas, new systems, and new cultures to *The One Ring Roleplaying Game*. While much of the material here is for players, Loremasters will find a great deal for them as well

within these pages, including complete summaries of the various systems that players regularly use in the game.

The *Adventurer's Companion* is broken into five parts, each of which have a slightly different focus. **Part One** is called **Characters** and it opens with a useful outline of all the steps needed to make a new character for *The One Ring Roleplaying Game*. That is followed by a section entitled **Crafting a Companion** which is really at the heart of what this supplement is about – it offers different approaches to consider when setting out to create a memorable adventurer, discusses literary archetypes and how they can be used, and gives some thought to how a company first forms. There are few rules here, per se, but lots to ponder over.

The majority of Part One is then given over to thirteen **Heroic Cultures** that supplement those found within *The One Ring Roleplaying Game*. Here are the noble **Men of Minas Tirith** who stand daily against the Shadow in the East that sits on their very border. Here are the secretive **Elves of Lórien** who leave their Golden Wood rarely, but always with purpose. Here you will find the **Dwarves of the Mountains** both **Blue** and **Grey**, as well as the stalwarts of the **Iron Hills**. Here dwell the **Wild Hobbits** who never came west to the pleasant land of the Shire. Here are the valorous **Riders of Rohan** and the fierce **Dunlendings** who still hold a grudge against them. Here are the steady **Men of Bree**, the capricious **Wayward Elves**, and the gregarious **Men of the Lake**. And here, at the last, are two unique Heroic Cultures intended for more experienced groups: The **Rangers of the North** and the **High Elves of Rivendell**.

Part Two is about **New Rules**. A new calling, the **Leader**, has been added to the game, alongside some new rules for allowing inexperienced characters to travel with a more seasoned hero, such as when say, four untried Hobbits set out to accompany a time-worn Ranger. No supplement for adventurers would be complete without detailing some new ways to improve one's competency, slice up foes and support one's friends. The section on **New Combat Rules** and **Expanded Masteries** adds various ways to all of the above.

Part Three focuses on the time **Between Adventures**. **The Fellowship Phase** gives an organized accounting and explanation of exactly how the Fellowship Phase works in *The One Ring Roleplaying Game*, detailing its structure and providing a clear summary of how Advancement and Experience points are spent. This section is directly followed by the exhaustive **Fellowship Phase Undertakings** which holds a comprehensive list of every undertaking published at the time of writing. **Of Patrons and Patronage** lists a number of the Great and the Wise of Middle-earth who may choose to act as

patrons, exploring exactly why a company may wish to place themselves under the patronage of each, along with some new rules for Loremasters denoting some of what they may be able to do for a company of aspiring heroes who can live up to their (sometimes quite demanding) standards.

After the patrons comes a section describing various **Famous Companies of the Wild**. This details companies that have achieved fame in Wilderland and discusses the various reasons why player-heroes may wish to belong to such groups, along with pointers to the Loremaster for how to use these groups as the centre of a campaign.

The One Ring Roleplaying Game values the passage of time in everything from its adventure structure to the Year's End Phases. Some Loremasters and players may wish to explore the vagaries of time and their characters' lives with these new rules concerning the **Passage of Years**. This section adds optional yearly events to the lives of companions, leading to incidents both sweet and bitter, and with that addition, sets the stage for new rules on **Heirs** and the Undertaking to name one should a player-hero fall to darkness... or even actually manage to retire due to choice, injury, or old age!

Following weighty discussion comes **Part Four**, **Curious Diversions**. Here there are ways to set about **Customizing Traits**. There is also a series of charts randomizing **Travelling Gear** and the various odds and ends that might end up **In its Pockets** – that is to say, a would-be adventurer's pockets. Finally, adventurers with a gift for song will be interested in hearing more about the **Musical Instruments** of Middle-earth.

Finally, we conclude with **Part Five: For Reference**. The **Call to Arms** summarises all of the steps that companions and the Loremaster go through during a combat, noting the various tests to be made and their ramifications. This section also includes some suggestions on adding descriptions of exactly what is happening during a fight in order to move beyond the mere clatter of the dice and explore what exactly bonus Success dice represent. **The Road Beckons** does much the same for Journeys, giving a clear summary of the various travel steps, along with some pointers on expanding on descriptions of what occurs along the way.

Taking Counsel rounds out the section with a full summary of how an encounter is played. Additionally, there is a section for Loremasters on introducing variations in how Tolerance works during a roleplaying encounter.

The new rules found throughout the *Adventurer's Companion* are, in the main, optional ones. Loremasters and players should agree on which of the new systems presented here should become part of their campaigns; however, the suggestions about roleplaying a compelling companion will hopefully find use in many campaigns of *The One Ring*.

part one
characters

- making a hero -

"Why, even Gollum might be good in a tale, better than he is to have by you, anyway. And he used to like tales himself once, by his own account. I wonder if he thinks he's the hero or the villain?"

How to Create a Character

The following pages show you how to create a hero drawn from one of the Heroic Cultures of Middle-earth. Using the guidelines presented in this chapter, all players will be able to create their hero, complete with strengths and weaknesses, possessions and aspirations.

These rules are also found in *The One Ring Roleplaying Game*, but are included here to speed up character creation when everyone is gathered around the same table. Players may still need to refer to *The One Ring Roleplaying Game* on occasion, depending on which culture they have selected..

The character creation process takes a number of steps, and aims to create fictional individuals that are as close as possible to their player's wishes, and that at the same time conform to the source material. The Loremaster should assist their players during this process, providing insight into the rules when needed, or simply to advise a player in making choices that are both true to the game's setting and make for a satisfying character to play.

Heroic Culture

In a world where different races coexist, the culture to which a character belongs often defines them more profoundly than simply in terms of customs and traditions. Even good and evil in the broadest terms can sometimes depend on culture in Middle-earth, as evil is manifest and the various peoples collectively pledge allegiance to the Shadow, or fight against it.

1. Select a Heroic Culture

The character creation process begins with the choice of the culture to which the character belongs. This defines the hero's race, their most basic descriptive features, and the area of Middle-earth from which they come.

Players are asked to read the description of the Heroic Cultures and make (or determine at random) some simple choices. All data generated during this step should be recorded on a player's character sheet in pencil.

A player may create a character belonging to one of 17 different Heroic Cultures, described either in *The One Ring Roleplaying Game* or elsewhere in this companion.

Hero Creation Summary

Heroic Culture
1. Select a Heroic Culture
2. Record a character's Cultural blessing
3. Record a character's starting skill list
4. Select two Specialities
5. Roll (or choose) Background
6. Record Basic Attributes and Favoured skill
7. Select two Distinctive Features

Customisation
1. Choose your hero's Favoured Attributes
2. Spend Previous Experience to buy skill levels
3. Choose a Calling
4. Choose Favoured Skills
5. Note Trait
6. Record Shadow Weakness
7. Generate the scores for Endurance and Hope
8. Prioritise the scores for Valour and Wisdom
9. Choose a starting Reward OR Virtue
10. Record Starting Gear and Fatigue
11. Calculate Combat Ratings
12. Pick Adventuring Age
13. Name your Hero

- Bardings (see *The One Ring Roleplaying Game*, page 37)
- Beornings (see *The One Ring Roleplaying Game*, page 42)
- Dunlendings (see page 25)
- Dwarves of the Blue Mountains (see page 31)
- Dwarves of the Grey Mountains (see page 36)
- Dwarves of the Iron Hills (see page 41)
- Dwarves of the Lonely Mountain (see *The One Ring Roleplaying Game*, page 47)
- Elves of Lórien (see page 46)
- Elves of Mirkwood (see *The One Ring Roleplaying Game*, page 53)
- Hobbits of the Shire (see *The One Ring Roleplaying Game*, page 60)
- Men of Bree (see page 51)
- Men of the Lake (see page 57)
- Men of Minas Tirith (see page 63)
- Riders of Rohan (see page 69)
- Wayward Elves (see page 77)
- Wild Hobbits (see page 82)
- Woodmen of Wilderland (see *The One Ring Roleplaying Game*, page 67)

A player may pick the following Advanced Cultures only with the permission of the Loremaster (see page 87):

- High Elves of Rivendell (see page 89)
- Rangers of the North (see page 96)

Some consideration should be given to the combination of cultures chosen within a company, to maintain the focus of the game – this is discussed further on page 22.

2. Record Cultural Blessing

Each Heroic Culture provides a special ability displayed by all player-heroes belonging to it, from the *Fey Mood* of the Riders of Rohan to the *Redoubtable* nature of the Dwarves of the Lonely Mountain – this is their Cultural Blessing. Players should note it down on their character sheet, along with a brief summary of its effects.

3. Record Starting Skill List

All characters belonging to a given folk receive a set of Common and Weapon skill ranks. Players should note that an underlined skill name denotes a favoured skill, while a Weapon skill name in (brackets) indicates a Cultural weapon group. All skill ratings should be written down on the hero's character sheet.

Skills are described on pages 85-92 of *The One Ring Roleplaying Game*.

4. Select Two Specialities

Specialities are aptitudes typically displayed by heroes from a given culture. Players add nuance to their hero's build by choosing two of the Specialities listed for their Heroic Culture, and writing them in the 'Traits' section of the character sheet.

Specialities are described on pages 94-97 of *The One Ring Roleplaying Game*.

5. Choose Background

Backgrounds are example 'character packages' appropriate to the culture, each offering a brief description of the hero's personality, or some details regarding how a hero spent their formative years. Each background also lists the hero's starting basic Attributes, an additional favoured skill, and a number of Distinctive features for the player to choose from.

Players who are new to roleplaying games, or who are not particularly knowledgeable about Tolkien's world, may let the roll of a die make the decision about which background applies to their character.

Hobby veterans, Middle-earth scholars or simply players who are feeling creative right away may roll or choose their background to obtain their characters' values and traits, and then should use the given descriptions only as starting points to customise or as inspiration for inventing their own.

6. Record Basic Attributes and Favoured Skill

There are three attributes in *The One Ring*: Body, Heart and Wits, describing a character's fundamental physical, emotional and mental capabilities. The basic rating of the attributes is determined by a character's background.

The player should copy the basic attribute scores listed in their background onto their character sheet, and underline the additional favoured skill.

7. Select Two Distinctive Features

Distinctive features are elements of physical description provided by a character's background. Players choose two of the Distinctive features listed for their background, and write them in the 'Traits' section of the character sheet.

Distinctive features are described on pages 97-100 of *The One Ring Roleplaying Game*.

Customisation

Once players have chosen their character's cultural template and have compiled their character sheet accordingly, they then customise their characters by making some additional choices. This step lets players define what motivated a character to become an adventurer (by selecting one of the six Callings) and what skills and knowledge they have picked up before the game begins.

Players should be consistent during character design, ensuring that their player-heroes are well-rounded but believable characters.

1. Choose your Hero's Favoured Attributes

Each character starts with a set of basic Attribute values determined by their chosen background. Players now get to generate their characters' favoured Attributes, by adding bonuses to the basic scores. Favoured Attribute scores represent the character's potential to excel when drawing on experience and training.

To generate the scores possessed by a hero as favoured Attributes, players add 3 to one Attribute, 2 to a second Attribute, and 1 to the remaining one, copying the new totals in the smaller boxes overlapping the Attribute boxes on the character sheet.

2. Spend Previous Experience to Buy Skill Levels

Players may now raise some of their skill levels, to represent their heroes' experiences prior to their life as fully fledged adventurers.

Players have 10 points to spend on raising their skills, unless the Loremaster permits the option of playing a member of the 'Advanced' Cultures, the High Elves of Rivendell or the Rangers of the North, who receive more points. The cost of raising each skill is shown in the two tables below. The first table gives the costs for Common skill levels, while the second shows the costs for Weapon skill levels.

Players are free to raise their skills as they see fit, as long as they have enough points to buy the desired skill level. They can also buy ranks in skills they previously didn't possess at all, or buy multiple ranks in the same skill, as long as they pay the cost of each level individually.

Players may also buy a first level in a new individual Weapon skill, but not a new Cultural Weapon skill or favoured weapon skill.

Common Skill level to attain	Cost
♦	1 point
♦♦	2 points
♦♦♦	3 points
♦♦♦♦	4 points
♦♦♦♦♦	5 points

Weapon Skill level to attain	Cost
♦	2 points
♦♦	4 points
♦♦♦	6 points

3. Choose a Calling

Characters must have a strong motivation to become an adventurer. This motivation is known as a character's Calling. Each player chooses their character's calling from six available options. These descriptions do not represent a character's profession or trade, but the ambitions and aspirations that eventually set him on the road. While a Calling can be used to summarise a character's drive as they start out, they should not be viewed as restrictions; the heroes are likely to evolve in the course of the game.

From a gaming perspective, the choice of a Calling offers players a way to customise their characters and add details.

Calling	Favoured Skill Groups	Trait	Shadow Weakness	Page Ref.
Leader	Personality, Vocation	Leadership	Lure of Power	*Adventurer's Companion*, Page 104
Scholar	Perception, Vocation	Rhymes of Lore	Lure of Secrets	*The One Ring*, page 73
Slayer	Movement, Personality	Enemy-lore (choose from Dragons, Giants, Orcs, Spiders, Trolls or Wolves)	Curse of Vengeance	*The One Ring*, page 74
Treasure Hunter	Movement, Perception	Burglary	Dragon-sickness	*The One Ring*, page 74
Wanderer	Custom, Survival	Folk-lore	Wandering-madness	*The One Ring*, page 75
Warden	Personality, Survival	Shadow-lore	Lure of Power	*The One Ring*, page 75

Callings are described in *The One Ring Roleplaying Game*, but summarised in the table above for ease of reference. A new Calling – the Leader – is also introduced in this supplement, and is described on page 104.

4. Choose Favoured Skills

Each Calling description lists two Common skill groups. When a player selects a Calling, they choose two skills from the favoured groups (from either group, or one from each group), and underlines them as favoured skills.

5. Note Additional Trait

Those who follow a Calling have an interest or ability in common. Each Calling gives characters a Speciality Trait, which should be recorded on a player's character sheet.

6. Record Shadow Weakness

The driving motivation behind an adventurer's Calling can be twisted and perverted if the hero succumbs to evil temptations or seeks to exert their own will upon others. A character's Shadow weakness suggests the path they will follow if he fails to resist the Shadow's influence (see *The One Ring Roleplaying Game*, page 227).

7. Generate the Scores for Endurance and Hope

Endurance and Hope are the fundamental resources that keep a character going. Their starting scores are based on a hero's basic Heart rating and modified by their Culture (as shown on the table opposite).

Starting Resources:

Culture	Endurance	Hope
Bardings	22 + Heart	8 + Heart
Beornings	24 + Heart	8 + Heart
Men of Bree	20 + Heart	6 + Heart
Dunlendings	20 + Heart	6 + Heart
All Dwarves	28 + Heart	6 + Heart
Silvan Elves (Lórien, Mirkwood, Wayward)	22 + Heart	8 + Heart
High Elves of Rivendell	25 + Heart	7 + Heart
All Hobbits	16 + Heart	12 + Heart
Men of Minas Tirith	22 + Heart	8 + Heart
Men of the Lake	22 + Heart	8 + Heart
Rangers of the North	23 + Heart	8 + Heart
Riders of Rohan	22 + Heart	8 + Heart
Woodmen of Mirkwood	20 + Heart	10 + Heart

8. Prioritise the Scores for Valour and Wisdom

Valour and Wisdom measure a hero's resistance to Fear and the Shadow, and track their stature in terms of power and renown. Both scores range from 1 to 6, and rise over the course of the game. Players are asked to simply prioritise one characteristic over the other:

The player assigns a score of 2 to one characteristic, and 1 to the other. Both numbers are entered on the character sheet in the boxes labelled Wisdom and Valour.

9. Choose a Starting Reward OR Virtue

Starting with rank 2, characters receive a special benefit with every new rank they reach in either Valour or Wisdom. Benefits obtained by raising a character's Valour score are called Rewards, while benefits granted by ranks in Wisdom are called Virtues. Thus, when players choose between the characteristics during hero creation, they are also choosing if their characters will start the game with a Reward, or with a Virtue:

Valour 2 - Wisdom 1: The hero receives their first Reward. The player should refer to *The One Ring Roleplaying Game* page 113, or to the relevant Heroic Culture's description if found elsewhere, and pick the first Reward due to a hero of their character's Culture.

Wisdom 2 - Valour 1: The hero has displayed their first Virtue. The player should go to *The One Ring Roleplaying Game*, page 103, or to the relevant Heroic Culture's description if found elsewhere, and choose a Virtue among those available to a hero of their character's Culture.

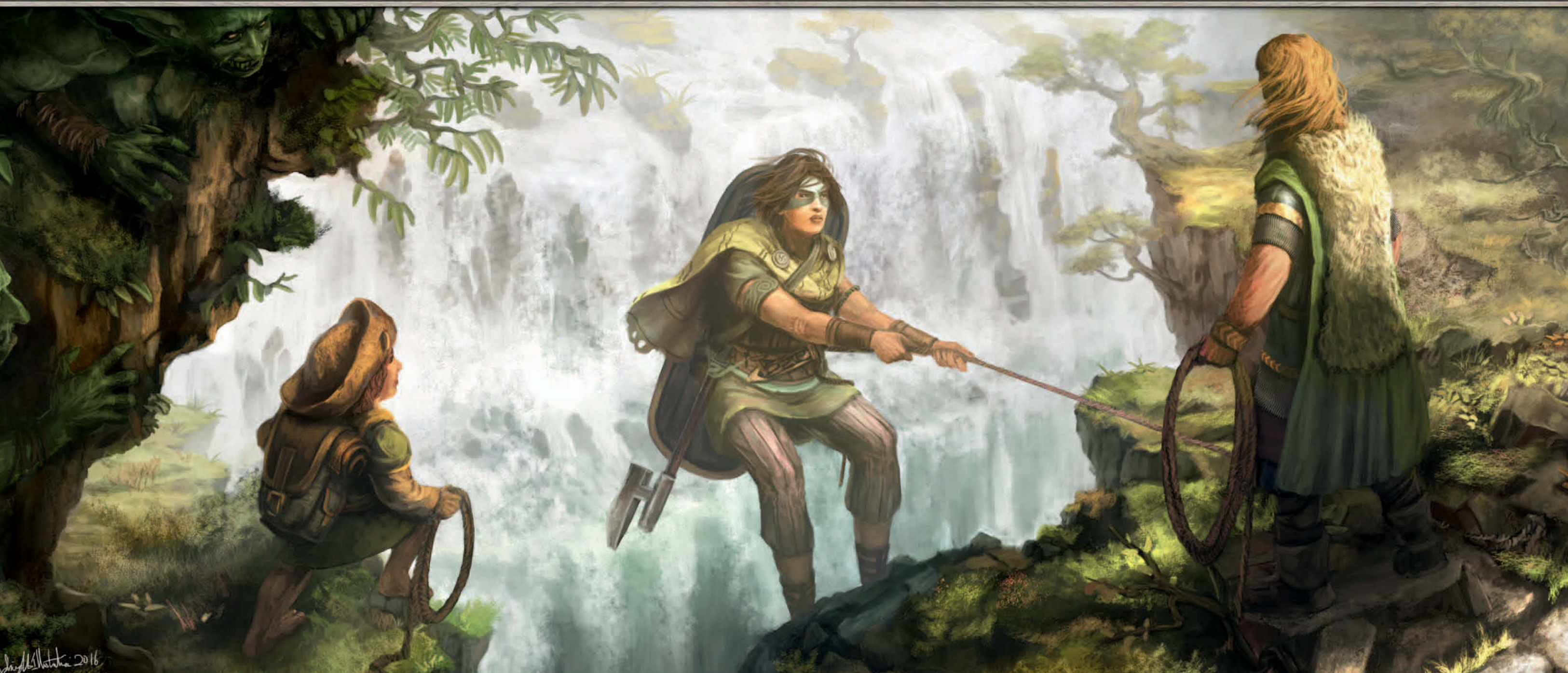
10. Record Starting Gear and Fatigue

All heroes start their adventuring career fully equipped with all the personal items and gear they consider best suited to a life on the road. For the sake of simplicity, the game presents such possessions as a character's travelling gear and war gear.

Fatigue Score

Each piece of a player-hero's war gear possesses an Encumbrance rating, representing the hindrance that the item causes to the carrier, both in terms of weight and discomfort (for example, a helm which significantly limits its wearer's vision has a higher Encumbrance rating than a suit of leather armour, regardless of weight).

All the Encumbrance ratings of the various items normally carried by a hero, excluding travelling gear, are added up to find their starting Fatigue score, to be recorded on a character sheet alongside his Endurance rating (see *The One Ring Roleplaying Game*, page 127, to learn about the effects of Fatigue on a hero).



Travelling Gear

A hero's travelling gear includes all the typical belongings that they carries when travelling, in addition to their weapons and armour. Players take into consideration the Encumbrance rating of their traveling gear only when they are using the rules for resolving a Journey (see *The One Ring Roleplaying Game*, page 158).

The composition and Encumbrance rating of travelling gear varies depending on the time of the year. Winter and autumn gear (in the cold months of the year) for one character has an Encumbrance rating of 3, and includes thick warm clothes (jackets, fur-lined cloaks), blankets, water, food. Summer and spring gear (in the warm months of the year) has an Encumbrance rating of 2, and includes light clothes and cloaks, blankets, water, food.

Both sets of travelling gear include food supplies for one week of travelling (if the journey is going to last more than a week, the companions will generally have to rely on their skills as hunters).

Musical Instruments

Music and song is an important part of the culture of the Free Peoples. Skilled musicians will usually carry one or more musical instruments with them on their travels. If a player-hero possesses a **Song** skill level of 1 or more, their travelling gear may include a musical instrument appropriate to their culture. See *Curious Diversions,* starting on page 140 for further inspiration on instruments.

Gear of War

Any weapon, suit of armour, helm or shield carried by an adventurer must be individually recorded on the character sheet, along with its Encumbrance rating. Their total Encumbrance score is taken into account to find a hero's initial Fatigue rating.

Small-sized Heroes

Due to their reduced size, Hobbits and Dwarves cannot use larger weapons effectively. Dwarves fare somewhat better than Hobbits, as they are usually taller and their work as miners and smiths endows them with powerful arms and shoulders.

The weapons available to Hobbits and Dwarves are as follows:

- Dwarves: short sword, sword, axe, great axe, spear, mattock, dagger, bow.
- Hobbits: short sword, axe, spear, dagger, bow.

Additionally, Dwarves and Hobbits cannot use a great shield.

Weapons

A starting player-hero is assumed to carry one weapon for each of the Weapon skills for which they have a rating.

A Barding hero starts the game with Great Bow ♦♦ and Spear ♦. He is entitled to have a great bow and a spear among his possessions.

Heroes with Cultural Weapon skills may choose one specific weapon among a wider selection as part of his possessions.

A Wood-elf hero with (Spears) ♦♦ is entitled to choose between carrying a spear or a great spear.

The War Gear lists found on page 160 include all weapons that are available to players. Players should record the statistics for their chosen weapons on their character sheets.

Armour and Shields

A newly-created character starts with one suit of armour, and may choose one piece of headgear and one shield. Players should record their chosen armour, headgear and shields on their character sheets, paying attention to the following notes:

The Protection score of a coat of armour is recorded separately from that of a piece of headgear (as sometimes, during combat, a hero might resort to dropping it to avoid becoming Weary too soon).

Shields do not offer direct protection from wounds, but make a hero less likely to be hit, by providing a bonus to Parry (which is usually derived from Wits). A shield's rating is recorded separately from the main box devoted to Parry, as a shield can be smashed by an opponent's blows.

Steeds

Most characters do not begin play with a horse or a pony to ride, although they may request one as additional gear (see below). A Rider of Rohan hero, however, always begins play with a Travel horse (see page 71).

Additional Gear

If a player would like to expand their character's equipment beyond the scope of a hero's travelling gear and war gear, the decision is up to the Loremaster. If the Loremaster agrees, they should take the character's Standard of Living into consideration, to determine the quantity and quality of any additional items (see *The One Ring Roleplaying Game*, page 120).

In general terms, the amount of extra equipment carried is as relevant as a Loremaster and their players want it to be: usually, Encumbrance is closely monitored only as far as war gear and treasure is concerned.

11. Calculate Combat Ratings

An adventurer's basic combat abilities are reflected by their Parry rating and Damage bonus, determined as follows:

A character's Damage rating is equal to their basic Body score, both for attacks made with a close combat weapon or a ranged weapon. Players should record their heroes' Damage bonus scores on the character sheet. Should a character's ranged attack Damage rating differ from that of close combat attacks, the player should record it in the separate box (special abilities and items might benefit one type of attack or the other).

A character's Parry rating is equal to their basic Wits score, modified by a positive bonus if the hero is using a buckler, a shield or a great shield (see *The One Ring Roleplaying Game*, page 124). Players should record their heroes' Parry score on the character sheet.

12. Pick Adventuring Age

Players choose the starting age of their character using the information in their Heroic Culture as a guide. A character's age is recorded on the back of the character sheet, under 'Background'. Heroes rarely start their adventuring career before they are deemed fully grown by their culture. On the other hand, if they progress too far into adulthood without answering the call to adventure, then they probably won't heed it at all.

13. Name your Hero

The final step of character creation is for the player to pick a name for their hero. Each of the Heroic Cultures includes guidance on naming conventions and lists of common male and female names.

Languages in the Game

In the game, all player-heroes are considered to be able to speak the Common Speech at least at an acceptable level of fluency, in addition to their own native languages. The table on the following page lists the languages spoken by the cultures presented in this chapter.

Additionally, there are several characteristics that can be used to represent knowledge of foreign or ancient tongues:

Elven-lore

An Elf hero with this trait possesses some knowledge of the High-elven speech (Quenya), also known as the Ancient Tongue. At the end of the Third Age, Quenya is

used in Middle-earth mostly as a ceremonial language, on inscriptions or in invocations.

Folk-lore

A character with a knowledge of *Folk-lore* can communicate on a basic level with most folks among the Free Peoples, knowing key words and expressions in most languages.

Trading

Characters who have often had to deal with merchants in foreign countries have generally picked up a word or two in various local languages, and can state their intentions fairly clearly, as long as they do not need to communicate overly complex or profound matters.

Culture	Main Language	Secondary Language	Notes
Bardings and Men of Lake-town	Dalish	-	Bardings speak what can be described as a very old form of the Common Speech.
Beornings and Woodmen	Vale of Anduin tongue	-	The language of the folks of the Vale of Anduin is an old form of the Common Speech, closely related to Dalish.
Men of Bree	Common Speech	-	While the Men of Bree claim to be the descendants of the first Men to wander West of the world, few know anything of their heritage.
Dunlendings	Dunland tongue	-	The Dunland tongue is an ancient speech, once spoken in many valleys of the Mark of the Riders.
All Dwarves	Local Mannish speech	Dwarvish (secret tongue)	All Dwarves speak the tongue of the local communities of Men, but preserve a knowledge of their 'secret language'.
Dwarves of the Lonely Mountain	Dalish	Dwarvish (secret tongue)	The Dwarves of Erebor speak the tongue of the Bardings, but preserve a knowledge of their 'secret tongue'.
Elves of Lórien	Grey-elven (Sindarin)	-	The Silvan Elves of Lórien seldom use any tongue but that of their Lord and Lady.
Elves of Mirkwood	Grey-elven (Sindarin)	Woodland Elvish	The Silvan Elves used to speak an original Woodland tongue, but are gradually embracing the use of Sindarin.
Elves of Rivendell	Grey-elven (Sindarin)	High-elven (Quenya)	The Elves of Rivendell use Sindarin for daily use, and the Ancient Tongue for ceremony, in song and in high matters of lore.
Hobbits of the Shire	Common Speech	-	Hobbits have forgotten their native languages, and use the Common Tongue, preserving the use of only a few words and names of their own.
Rangers of the North and Men of Minas Tirith	Common Speech	Grey-elven (Sindarin)	The native language of the Dúnedain is the Westron, or Common Speech. Some still learn the Sindarin Elven-tongue, as it is handed on from generation to generation.
Riders of Rohan	Rohan Tongue	Grey-elven (Sindarin)	The tongue spoken in Rohan is related to the language of the Anduin Vales. Since the crowning of Thengel King the language of Gondor is spoken at court.
Wayward Elves	Woodland Elvish	Grey-elven (Sindarin)	The Wayward Elves favour the use of their original Woodland tongue, and use Sindarin only when dealing with others.
Wild Hobbits	Vale of Anduin tongue	-	The language of the folks of the Vale of Anduin is an old form of the Common Speech, closely related to Dalish.

Crafting a - Companion -

His face was sad and stern because of the doom that was laid upon him, and yet hope dwelt ever in the depths of his heart, from which mirth would arise at times like a spring from a rock.

Characters in *The One Ring Roleplaying Game* are more than just numbers and abilities listed on a character sheet. Players and Loremaster collaborate to create the shared story they are building at the table, but breathing life into memorable heroes is the charge of the players. By doing this, players can help the Loremaster plant the seeds for an epic narrative that may see them not only slay Orcs, Goblins and Trolls, but also change and grow through their experiences.

This chapter discusses different techniques for creating companions with moving stories to tell by exploring some of the aspects of the canonical characters of Middle-earth and the archetypes they represent. It also encourages asking questions about how each hero perceives the world and their place in it in order to facilitate engaging roleplaying. Finally, it ends with a discussion of how different companies form and each character's place within them.

The Call to Adventure

While players making a new character choose their Heroic Culture first, their choice of Calling is arguably the most significant for their companion's personal history, for it helps determine why they set out from their safe lives for ones of danger. The folk of Middle-earth generally keep to themselves, often ignoring the troubles of others.

It is no small thing to break away from one's people — some of whom are very insular indeed — and journey into the Wild to help others. Adventurers are looked at somewhat askance in every land, at least until they've proven themselves to be genuine heroes, and not opportunistic brigands.

Their motivations, then, must be strong ones — passions that burn bright enough to push back the cold of the mountains, to spur one on into driving rain or deep under the eaves of Mirkwood. These drives are encompassed in the various Callings which are, by design, somewhat broad, allowing each player to explore exactly why their hero chose such a dangerous path.

Where does a Warden's desire to protect others spring from? Why does a Treasure Hunter seek out wealth – open greed, or a desire to find a particular lost artefact? What loss drives a Slayer? Does a Scholar seek to learn a specific secret or sample many lores? Why does a Leader feel she must guide others? What does a Wanderer hope to see?

Where the Fall May Come

In addition to helping to determine why each hero sets out, their Calling dictates the nature of a hero's Shadow Weakness, the course their road will run if they fall into Shadow. All of the Shadow Weaknesses hold up a dark mirror to each hero's reasons for setting out into the Wild, distorting their best intentions.

Players should consider what their characters think about their "darker sides" or if they are even yet aware that they have one. A few folk are highly critical of themselves, considering every action carefully, while others live only in the moment. Some players may well wish to consider what the first Flaw is for their companion's Shadow Weakness (long before they actually have it) and occasionally shade a touch of it into their personality.

For example, a Scholar may disdain what some simple farmers have to say, for "what could they know" *(Haughty)* but soon allow herself to be convinced by their arguments. An otherwise kindly Warden may occasionally grumble about "the incompetents" *(Resentful)* he has to watch out for. He clearly speaks in jest and lightly, but the comments are there, all the same...

Open Backstory

Character creation in *The One Ring Roleplaying Game* directly builds in some of a companion's personal history through the choice of Background. The Backgrounds connect a character to the Heroic Culture from which they come, often mentioning relatives or other important people in a companion's life, such as a teacher; however, no player should feel they have to take the descriptive part of each Background exactly as written and should certainly adjust it to suit the character they wish to play. While the mechanical aspects of the Backgrounds (Attributes, Favoured Skill, Distinctive Features) are generally set for game balance purposes, the rest can be altered.

While some players delight in writing an extensive backstory for their character, allowing unexpected memories and experiences to surface while actually playing the game can be a rewarding way of exploring who a companion is. One of the strengths of a roleplaying character is that they are a blank slate—the player, occasionally with some input from the Loremaster, chooses what shaped their hero, but no definitive decisions have to be made in advance of play of what those drives were.

Where a player chooses to allocate their character's Previous Experience points – beyond the standard skills that all members of their Heroic Culture learn – implies things about their character's history, but they don't have to decide in advance of play exactly what those experiences were. The events of the game and their fellow players can give the others opportunities to highlight aspects of their character's past by asking questions in character.

For example, say we have the warrior Burin, a Dwarf of the Lonely Mountain whose player allocated his Previous Experience in such a way that Burin starts with a **Stealth** of 3. During his first adventure it comes up that Burin moves surprisingly quietly; indeed, his Hobbit companion Mentha Burrows is impressed: why, he doesn't make the "Dwarvish racket" she has heard so much about at all! When Mentha asks how the Dwarf learned to move so quietly, Burin's player now has an opportunity– perhaps he just wanted Burin to be stealthy and never really thought about it till the moment he was asked. He already knew that Burin was a miner though, so he swiftly spins a story about how he had once worked in a dangerous area of the Deeps below Erebor where a stray sound could cause a deadly cave-in; however Burin answers, the rest of the company learns more about him and perhaps so does his player!

More about a starting hero's backstory can be divined from the choice to initially prioritize either Valour or Wisdom. While either decision says something about the character, it doesn't necessarily mean they value one over the other. A valorous warrior may esteem those with keen insight, knowing he has little of his own. A Barding who has spent her life in a library may wish to emulate the heroes in the tales she has read, even if she is far more accustomed to wielding books than swords.

The player's choice dictates whether they start with a Reward or a Virtue, but the significance of either doesn't have to be decided before play begins. One warrior may carry a deadly sharp spear, but doesn't "mention" that it was actually his father's until it comes up during a game. Exactly how did the Woodman acquire her hound? Did she raise it from a pup, or inherit the beast from her dead brother? The details matter, but they don't necessarily have to be filled in until they come up in play.

Common Knowledge

Whatever culture a player chooses for their hero, they should consider how much their companion shares the typical views of their culture, and on what points they disagree. Perhaps their character takes the views of their culture to an extreme. Are they a typical Elf, somewhat suspicious of outsiders; or are they atypical, greeting strangers with curiosity? Once the player has examined the standard elements of their Heroic Culture, especially the suggestions on how their folk typically regard others, they can then consider how their past informs the way their hero interacts with and views the rest of the world.

Character Archetypes

The best stories are built on great characters and many memorable ones draw on classic archetypes to swiftly connect with their audience—in this case, the audience being the other players and the Loremaster. The guides provide good examples of this, and by unpacking them a bit their use in building roleplaying characters becomes evident. The following entries discuss some thematic archetypes found in the books, as well as listing the Distinctive Features most appropriate to them.

The Aspiring Hero

'It is true that if these hobbits understood the danger, they would not dare to go. But they would still wish to go, or wish that they dared, and be shamed and unhappy.'

The Aspiring Hero has clearly heard the call to adventure and wishes to set forth in the world to do what they can to help others. Some may doubt their abilities, or even suspect that their courage may not be enough, yet they feel that "somebody must do something" and if no one else is going to act, they will. Would-be heroes are often young, for elders frequently have more community responsibilities or family obligations and would be hard-pressed to set off into a life of peril and uncertain reward. Still, sometimes the call comes late in life. For every handful of earnest young adventurers, there is an old soldier that cannot dismiss the shadow of a threat that grows in their mind, and thus feels compelled to scrape the rust off long unused war gear to set out once more into the fray.

Many starting heroes have a touch of this archetype, but it certainly isn't required—Companions set out on the road for a variety of reasons, not all of which are necessarily completely altruistic. One of the hallmarks of the Aspiring Hero is that they still have hope that the world can be made a better place through their efforts. The character creation rules in *The One Ring Roleplaying Game* reflect this well, allowing a "new" hero to have a grounding in many skills and some experience, yet their hope remains.

In the books, the marks of the Aspiring Hero are evident in the younger Hobbits, who set out into the Wild at first for friendship and loyalty, but press on as they discover along the way that there are matters of great import to be attended to far from the Shire. Players can choose to make characters that they know will grow into heroes, but start out with modest ambitions, such as "I just want to make certain the Wolves stop attacking our village." But these characters end up finding, like so many Aspiring Heroes, that once you're on the path, it isn't easy (or sometimes even possible) to just go home.

Aspiring Hero Distinctive Features: Adventurous, Clever, Curious, Determined, Eager, Energetic, Forthright, Generous, Merciful, Nimble, Reckless, True-hearted, Trusty

The Loner

'His ways were hard and long, and he became somewhat grim to look upon, unless he chanced to smile;'

Often stoic, invariably competent and usually deadly, the Loner travels the world seeking some elusive goal, though a few may wander only by inclination. The Loner's quest may be thought impossible, or is seemingly endless, such as the search for redemption from past misdeeds.

Frequently an outsider without personal connections of any kind, or anything that would "tie them down," the Loner deals death to his enemies, allowing himself only a small smile of satisfaction, before disappearing into the sunset.

The ruthless orphan Loner is somewhat of a cliché stereotype in fiction and among roleplayers, yet it has a great deal of appeal, in part because a large number of very well-known heroes share aspects of this archetype. In the books, we have Aragorn, son of Arathorn. The Last Chieftain of the Dúnedain doesn't have a name when we first meet him; we're merely informed (along with Frodo) that he is known as "Strider". Aragorn's father died when he was very young and his mother passed away before the events of the War of the Ring. We're told that in his past, he travelled alone in many lands, under many guises and many names. He is, on the surface, a classic Loner. Yet he cares deeply about the people he meets. His chosen seclusion is as much for the safety of others as for himself—the Shadow in the East constantly hunts for him, making him wary of others, even as he occasionally longs for companionship.

Making a hero with aspects of the Loner is fine, but a player that chooses to do so should remember this: it is not the job of the Loremaster to give a Loner character reasons to wish to belong to a company; it is the job of the player who created the companion to come up with reasons why their hero would wish to take part in it.

Such companions tend to have a great deal of martial prowess. They may be moody, off putting, inclined to wander on their own, steeped in old sorrows, etc. but they should also be prepared to rush to the aid of their fellows whenever they are needed.

Loner Distinctive Features: Cunning, Determined, Elusive, Grim, Gruff, Hardened, Hardy, Just, Robust, Secretive, Stern, Vengeful, Wary

The Double Act

Often he took Gimli with him when he went abroad in the land, and the others wondered at this change.

A Double Act consists of a set of partners, who may or may not be interesting individually, but frequently gain strength from the way their two distinctly different personalities play off of each other. Occasionally, the differences between the two characters are highlighted by their physical dissimilarity. Such duos do not have to be comedic; especially when drawn from markedly different cultures, sharing their contrasting perspectives can serve to expand others' views as they consider what the two characters have to say to one another.

The books have two Double Acts in them—Gimli & Legolas and Pippin & Merry. Gimli and Legolas obviously hold very different viewpoints when they first meet, the history of their two peoples giving each of them reasons to be somewhat suspicious of the other. It is not until Gimli encounters Galadriel of Lothlórien that his view of Elves changes dramatically. Players should consider that significant experiences during a campaign can change a companion's perspective. Players should realize that just as Legolas looks at Gimli in a different light, so might their own heroes regard their companions in new ways as those characters grow and change.

Pippin & Merry have similar world views and play off one another with the repartee of old friends with shared experiences, far closer in some ways to a classic comedy duo. Double Acts can come about in a campaign either by two players deliberately deciding to have such a relationship in advance (Pippin & Merry) or having them arise naturally during play (Gimli & Legolas). Players of characters with markedly different viewpoints should discuss some of their characters' views outside of play, deciding where their two characters' personalities overlap and where they clash. In duos with a lot of "old experiences" it can be fun to "remind" one's partner of previous escapades that they went through together long before—that is to say, one player makes up an "old" memory on the spot and throws it out for the other in the pair to "remember" as they see fit; however, their memory of the event may be significantly different...

Note that, while a pair of characters may travel and talk together regularly as Frodo and Sam do, they aren't automatically a Double Act. Frodo's and Sam's personalities don't really "play" off one another in such a way.

Double Act Distinctive Feature Pairings: Cautious / Eager, Curious / Wary, Fair-spoken / Gruff, Forthright / Secretive, Grim / Merry, Patient / Reckless, Small / Tall, Trusty / Suspicious

The Mentor

A lord of wisdom throned he sat, swift in anger, quick to laugh; an old man in a battered hat who leaned upon a thorny staff.

Wise and sometimes inscrutable, the Mentor exists to protect and teach others, using their knowledge to bring light into the darkness. Mentors have generally lived long and interesting lives, full of trials, some overcome and some failed. They're frequently steeped in hidden lore and mystical secrets. Mentors serve to guide less experienced heroes, keeping them safe until the Mentor's tutelage and advice can help them achieve victory against their foes.

Gandalf is a near perfect embodiment of the Mentor archetype, indeed, one of the gold standards in literature. While the Wandering Wizard is a Loremaster character, a starting player-hero could choose to act as a Mentor. Any character with a great deal of experience in a particular skill may be able to serve as a guide of sorts. Determining why such a character feels the need to pass along their accumulated knowledge is important to playing a Mentor.

For example, an aging Dwarf survivor of the Battle of Five Armies might have many years under his broad belt, along with a plethora of grim memories. He decides to dispense his martial wisdom so that others don't have to see so many friends die, as he did. A Woodman may take it upon herself to teach her fellow adventurers about the many dangers of Mirkwood, knowing how many have been lost to that dark forest.

A Loremaster can help out a would-be Mentor character, passing along various bits of arcane knowledge to a companion with a high **Lore**, such as information a High Elf of Rivendell may have or sound martial advice to one with a high **Battle**. Characters who manage to survive a long campaign may very well become a Mentor in time, especially if some of their fellow heroes retire (or fall in battle) to be replaced by new heroes in their company, ones that could use some pointers.

Mentor Distinctive Features: Clever, Determined, Elusive, Fair-spoken, Fierce, Gruff, Hardened, Honourable, Just, Lordly, Patient, Secretive, Stern

Introducing a New Character to an Existing Company

Whether because of a character's death or a new player joining an existing group, adding a new player-hero to an existing company can be both a challenge and an opportunity. While it's easy to have the company meet a character in a tavern, to cite the old cliché, it might be more rewarding to find a connection between the new player-hero and the existing company. What does the new hero mean to the company and what do they mean to the hero? Why does the hero want to go adventuring with them? It may be helpful to look back at the history of the group and see who they helped or influenced during their past adventures. See also page 104 for more about new characters adventuring with more experienced companions, and for rules on playing the heirs of a fallen hero.

The Reluctant Hero

An overwhelming longing to rest and remain at peace by Bilbo's side in Rivendell filled all his heart. At last with an effort he spoke, and wondered to hear his own words, as if some other will was using his small voice. `I will take the Ring,' he said, `though I do not know the way.'

While many heroes heed the call to adventure, the Reluctant Hero would rather heed the whistle of the kettle. Setting out because they feel they must, not because they want to, Reluctant Heroes serve unwillingly. There are deeds in the world that need doing and, for whatever reason, they feel compelled to act. There are as many motives for Reluctant Heroes to adventure as there are such heroes. The only trait they all share is a distinct hesitancy about a life of uncertainty and danger.

In the books, Frodo is clearly a Reluctant Hero, yet his desire to preserve the Shire for others helps drive him on. Reconciling the demands of a Calling with a hero that, on the surface, doesn't want any part of adventure requires a bit of thought. A player wishing to play a Reluctant Hero

should consider exactly why their companion feels that they must act against their own inclinations. A Warden may no longer wish for violence in her life, yet her oaths to protect others who cannot protect themselves still compel her to strap on her sword every morning. A Treasure Hunter may only be trying to collect enough money to open a quiet little tavern and leave the bothersome business of skulking about dank barrows far behind. Some Reluctant Heroes just seem to find themselves in the right place at the wrong time; others proceed even against their better judgement because they know it is the right thing to do, if not what their heart actually desires.

Not all Reluctant Heroes remain that way forever; while Bilbo certainly started out as a Reluctant Hero, with time and trials, his attitude slowly changing till later in life, he actively looked forward to new adventures.

Reluctant Hero Distinctive Features: Cautious, Clever, Curious, Determined, Forthright, Generous, Honourable, Just, Merciful, Steadfast, True-hearted, Trusty, Wary

The Honour-bound

'But since the way was full of doubt and danger, I took the journey upon myself.'

The Honour-bound hero is a principled one, who acts out of duty or loyalty to either their people or a specific person or cause. They may not necessarily be greatly skilled, but the strength of their conviction is visible to all. Honour-bound heroes often appear noble to others, though this is due to their bearing as much as their blood. They risk danger unflinchingly for their cause and their determination is a force to be reckoned with. Sworn oaths have a great deal of power in Middle-earth, so much so that the most powerful can seemingly set great and formidable events in motion. Many Honour-bound heroes have sworn such oaths.

Boromir and Samwise are both Honour-bound heroes, though their drives are very different. Boromir acts out of love of his people, his father, and his duty to Gondor. Sam bases the majority of his decisions and actions on his love of his master Frodo, but when the time comes, he dutifully prepares to struggle on to fulfil their quest, even if he must leave his beloved master behind. A player with an Honour-bound companion should decide exactly who or what has earned their loyalty, as well as deciding whether or not they've sworn any oaths. It might be best for something as mighty as swearing an oath to occur during a campaign; a player that wishes to have their character swear one should discuss it in advance with the Loremaster.

Honour-bound Distinctive Features: Bold, Determined, Fair-spoken, Forthright, Honourable, Just, Lordly, Proud, Reckless, Robust, Steadfast, Stern, True-hearted

Shared Toils

Being a hero in *The One Ring* means being part of a company of heroes, so a character should not be determined to stand alone. But equally, conflict between characters can be the source of great drama. Characters who (occasionally) rub each other the wrong way can make for powerful stories when they put aside their differences in the face of greater perils. Even the most altruistic heroes have their own needs and wants. Bringing up a character's desires in play, even when they may set them at odds with others in the company, can be an important facet of drama within a game. However, while their characters may have problems with one another, the players certainly shouldn't have. It's a good idea for players to note potential upcoming conflicts between their characters between sessions if they can, so when they crop up during a game, the conflict stays "in character".

Relations between the heroes within a company are meant to be friendly, but the fact that each character has a Fellowship focus means that various debates among the heroes may well be shaded by their personal loyalties to one another. Players should be prepared to regard what their Fellowship focus has to say with more weight than what others may offer during an argument among company members.

When players first create their companions, discussing which role within a party each character is most suited for is a good idea. Deciding in advance who will make the best healer, along with the various Journey roles, and allocating Previous Experience accordingly, helps build a solid company that will more readily be able to traverse the Wild.

Forging the Fellowship

> **'That is the purpose for which you are called hither. Called, I say. though I have not called you to me, strangers from distant lands. You have come and are here met, in this very nick of time, by chance as it may seem. Yet it is not so.'**

Company creation is a formal stage at the beginning of starting a game of *The One Ring*, and it is one that can be anticipated during the process of character creation. Players are encouraged to come up with the story of how and where their heroes met during the company creation phase, but it need not be a simple case of falling in together, simultaneously, in one place.

As the players build their companions together, they should ask why has (or will) this particular group of heroes joined into a company? There are many story aspects that could be at work here—external forces, shared histories, personal quests, obligations between companions and even a fair amount of luck. These drives are not mutually exclusive and a company of heroes will likely be connected by more than one reason.

Heroic Quest

> **The embers in the heart of Thorin grew hot again, as he brooded on the wrongs of his House and the vengeance upon the Dragon that he had inherited.**

Thorin Oakenshield's desire to reclaim the Lonely Mountain from the Dragon Smaug led the heir of Durin to form a company of thirteen Dwarves and a Hobbit, with an interested Wizard assisting along the way. Other heroes, too, might assemble a company of their own to aid them on some personal quest.

One of the player-heroes may start the campaign with a background that drives them to seek out kindred spirits to aid them in their endeavours. The other companions, then, each choose to join in the quest for their own reasons. Depending on the nature of the quest, it may change over time, or be fulfilled, causing the company as a whole to reassess their reasons and purpose for journeying together.

Called to Serve

> **'I think that this task is appointed to you, Frodo; and that if you do not find a way, no one will.'**

A company of heroes might be called together and asked to take action by another—most likely a leader, a king, lord, or elder among there folk, or perhaps one of the Wise, such as a Wizard or an ancient Elf. Such a character may well become a patron for the company (see page 125 for more on patrons). The companions may have been called for a specific purpose, such as protecting a village from an impeding attack, or a broader one, such

as strengthening the alliances between the Free Peoples. A Loremaster may decide, though, that their charge is not what it seems. The leader assembling the company may have hidden motivations. Depending on when the game takes place in the Tale of Years, perhaps Saruman the White has called the heroes together and they do not yet know of his treachery (or indeed, perhaps they may well prevent his treachery – see also *Horse-lords of Rohan* for more about this approach to play).

Once the company has been assembled and their task revealed, how do the characters react to the new responsibilities laid upon them?

Since company creation can be considered the first Fellowship phase, and their first meeting will generally take place at Year's End, the Loremaster might choose to tell the company about recent events; characters who start play with a Standing score might even be allowed to influence some of these events and bring them into the character creation process (see *The One Ring Roleplaying Game*, page 200 for details).

Personal Motivations

His love for Frodo rose above all other thoughts, and forgetting his peril he cried aloud: 'I'm coming Mr. Frodo!'

Like the Dwarves of Thorin's Company, or Merry, Pippin, Frodo and Sam, some or all of the player-heroes could hail from the same culture. But even if they do not share a cultural background, characters can still share a bond of friendship that connects them together.

Characters with such ties have clearly met before. If they derive from the same culture, they could be kin. What obligations do the player-heroes feel they have to one another? Samwise Gamgee is more than Frodo's gardener; Sam is Frodo's dedicated and loyal servant. This devotion to his employer, this sense of duty and love, spurs Sam to accompany Frodo to Mordor.

What binds the characters to each other that they would travel together and fight for one another? Do they feel a shared sense of duty to their king or lord? Or do they feel obligated only to protect their fellow companions?

Strange Chance

'We might now hope to return from the victory here only to ruin and ash. But that has been averted – because I met Thorin Oakenshield one evening on the edge of spring in Bree. A chance-meeting, as we say in Middle-earth.'

There is always a bit of chance and luck in the formation of a company. Bilbo found the Ring by happenstance—though it took all his wits to make off with it. This discovery ensured the formation of the Company of the Ring many years later, though fate or luck would still play a part. Boromir came seeking Elrond's advice about a strange dream, while Gimli accompanied Glóin to bring dark tidings of the Enemy. Legolas carried ill news of the creature Gollum who had escaped King Thranduil's dungeons. In Rivendell these heroes would hear the Tale of the Ring and form a great company.

What fortune might bring the player-heroes together? Do they meet on the road or find themselves drawn to the same place for different reasons? Depending on the nature of the campaign, they might soon learn that those reasons are not as different as they first appeared.

heroic - cultures -

"At any rate I am not yet one of the fallen heroes; but I suppose there is still time enough for that."

The heroes of Middle-earth come from many walks of life, drawn from many different cultures. Some come from martial cultures, whose very way of life is threatened by the Shadow; others come from peaceful havens, far from any trouble. Yet all feel the call to adventure.

This chapter contains rules and background for thirteen new cultures, as well as the virtues and rewards they might receive. Some of these cultures have appeared in supplements before, and are compiled here for your convenience; others are completely new. They complement those cultures described in *The One Ring Roleplaying Game*, but care should be taken when introducing them to your game so that a focus is maintained.

Maintaining Focus

One of the important things to bear in mind with *The One Ring* is its focused nature when it comes to character and company creation. With campaigns set in Wilderland and the six Heroic Cultures included in *The One Ring*, this focus was inherent. As the lands of Middle-earth are widened out and new Heroic Cultures are introduced, it's easy to lose sight of this focus and end up with a hodge-podge of different ideas and conflicting character concepts.

Rather than permit a player to take on any role within the group, consider limiting what Heroic Cultures might be available, encouraging players to choose carefully from those that make the most sense within the region the campaign is set in. By grounding a campaign in a region familiar to its heroes, rather than feature a company assembled from the four corners of Middle-earth, you'll keep a sense of investment in the fate of its peoples.

Choosing Appropriate Cultures for your Game

Wilderland: Bardings, Beornings, Dwarves of the Iron Hills, Dwarves of the Grey Mountains, Dwarves of the Lonely Mountain, Elves of Lórien, Men of the Lake, Wayward Elves, Wild Hobbits, Woodmen of Wilderland.

Rohan: Dunlendings, Elves of Lórien, Riders of Rohan, Men of Minas Tirith.

Gondor: Riders of Rohan, Men of Minas Tirith.

Eriador: Dunlendings, Dwarves of the Blue Mountains, High Elves of Rivendell, Hobbits of the Shire, Men of Bree, Rangers of the North.

New Heroic Cultures

The following Heroic Cultures are included in this section:

- Dunlendings (page 25)
- Dwarves of the Blue Mountains (page 31)
- Dwarves of the Grey Mountain (page 36)
- Dwarves of the Iron Hills (page 41)
- Elves of Lórien (page 46)
- Men of Bree (page 51)
- Men of the Lake (page 57)
- Men of Minas Tirith (page 63)
- Riders of Rohan (page 69)
- Wayward Elves of Mirkwood (page 77)
- Wild Hobbits (page 82)
- High Elves of Rivendell (page 89)
- Rangers of the North (page 96)

- Dunlendings -

...in the hills of Dunland a remnant lingered of an old people...

The wild folk dwelling in the misty fells of Dunland and to the south of the river Isen have many enemies. Since centuries uncounted they have been hunted, betrayed and despoiled, until the coming of the accursed Strawheads, horsemen from the North who drove them forth from their homes on the plains of Calenardhon some five hundred years ago.

But the passing of the centuries have erased the usurpers' memory of the wrong they suffered and left no trace of their claims. To everyone, including many among the Wise, the Dunlendings are just a dwindling folk of sullen herders and hunters, hating the Free Peoples of Middle-earth and holding onto long-forgotten grudges. Even so, they endure. Out of respect of their noble forefathers and the sorrow they went through, the hillmen of Dunland choose not to forget.

For the hillmen of Dunland are not a lowly folk of poor herders and hunters to be looked down upon, but many diverse clans united by ancient bonds of kinship. Most currently dwell within or close to the western slopes of the Misty Mountains, but their ancestors ruled over a wide land west and east of the mountain range, and many can be still found within the boundaries of the Mark of the Riders.

Saruman, the White Wizard, currently lives in the tower of Orthanc, north of the Gap of Rohan. He is known to welcome those hillmen who wish to return to live in Isengard, where the Dunlendings long dwelt. Whether he will remain a friend to the Dunlendings or he will prove to be no better than any other lord is a matter yet to be settled...

Description

The Riders of Rohan call the hillmen 'Dunlendings', for they are mostly swarthy, with dark hair and eyes. They live a hard life in the empty lands west of the mountains, roaming the Dunland Fells and the land between Isen and Adorn accompanying their herds and shunning other folk.

Men and women alike weave their hair in intricate braids, and wear clothes of dull colours, as the hillmen favour dyes that allow them to blend easily with their surroundings. The Dunlendings despise subtlety in speech, and they are quick to take offence and slow to give their trust to anyone outside those who speak their own tongue.

Standard of Living

The Dunlendings are a people of herders and hunters, scraping a meagre living in the shadow of a more powerful folk that exiled or confined them to the emptier corners of their realm. They constantly struggle to maintain their small flocks of sheep and horses along the sides of their foothills and cannot afford to trade, as their enmity with the Forgoil forbids it. Their culture ranks as *Frugal*.

Dunlending Adventurers

The harshness of life under the yoke of the crown of Rohan might easily feed a spark of rebellion in the heart of a young Dunlending, pushing them to desire a life away from the barren hillsides, and into a world where valour and wisdom are the only values to measure a man's worth. Most of these young men and women join a company of raiders and end up living a short, brutal life of theft and plunder. A few others refuse to acknowledge even the leadership of a war chieftain, and leave alone or with one or two like-minded individuals to go looking for a life of adventure.

Suggested Callings: *Slayer, Treasure-hunter*. Dunlendings have many grievances and all too often seek to settle them with blood, or to bury them under a pile of gold, taking it from their enemies or out of the graves their foes dug in stolen land.

Unusual Calling: *Scholar*. The folk of Dunland find no solace in studying the past, as too often it unearths sorrowful remembrances and regrets.

What Saruman the White Says...

- **Beornings and Woodmen:** "These Northmen of the vale of the Great River are akin to the Riders of Rohan who long have wronged you, but they do not resemble the Horse-lords much. The Beornings do not seem inclined to judge a folk based on the prejudices and quarrels of others, and while the Woodmen are easily impressed by those who to their eyes appear wise and powerful, they have a resilience that is not easily encountered."

- **Dwarves of the Lonely Mountain:** "Long ago the Dwarves came to you heavy with sorrow and loss, fleeing the ruin of the Lonely Mountain and the fire of a Dragon. At that time you proved that a folk of noble blood shows mercy and gave the Dwarves succour. Luckily, at least some among them haven't forgotten, and that's why a few traders from the Blue Mountains still take the road and come visiting."

- **Dunlendings:** "Yours is an ancient folk, with roots so deep that even your songs fail to celebrate them. As all Men, you are doomed to forget, and to repeat your mistakes over and over again. You are showing great wisdom by giving me your trust, and greater will be your reward."

- **Elves:** "In their wisdom, the Elves do not lower their gaze any more, and things that are worth preserving that are close to the earth escape their attention. As you know, I do not share such vision. The world is changing. The time of the Elves is over, but your time is at hand: the world of Men is coming."

- **Hobbits of the Shire:** "Ages ago, some of these halflings lived close to your lands. They are a childish folk, fortunate enough to live sheltered lives, very different from yours. But the day will come when every folk will be put to the test, and your sorrows will have given you greater strength than their comforts."

- **Riders of Rohan:** "Your grievances against them are well motivated, this is beyond doubt. But many of the wrongs against you were committed a long time ago, by their ancestors. Should the descendants of tyrants be held responsible for the crimes of their forefathers?

Their new king is a man who seems willing to give heed to reason. Let me be your voice at the courts of Edoras, and one day you will cross the Isen not to raid and hastily turn tail, but to reclaim the lands that were taken from you."

Cultural Blessing

- Fierce Folk -

"They will not give way now for dusk or dawn, until [...] they themselves are slain."

The hillmen of Dunland have been driven from their rightful lands, hunted like animals, forced into the hills, and all but forgotten. But they themselves have forgotten nothing. The fires of their wrath burn bright, holding back the cold of the mountains and allowing them to press on through battles with a grim resolve that others can scarcely believe.

- When a Dunlending receives a loss of Endurance that would make him Weary or reduce him to 0 Endurance, he may choose to gain a point of Shadow and cancel that Endurance loss.

Starting Skill Scores

Common Skills

Copy the following skill ranks onto the character sheet and underline the favoured skill:

Awe	1	Inspire	0	Persuade	0
Athletics	2	Travel	1	Stealth	2
Awareness	2	Insight	2	Search	1
Explore	2	Healing	0	Hunting	3
Song	0	Courtesy	0	Riddle	2
Craft	1	Battle	1	Lore	0

Weapon Skills

Choose one of the following two Weapon skill sets, and record it on the character sheet:

1) (Axes) 2, Spear 1, Dagger 1
2) Spear 2, Bow 1, Dagger 1

Specialities

Choose two Traits from:

Beast-lore, Fire-making, Herb-lore,
Misty Mountains Lore, Story-telling, Tracking.

New Trait: Tracking

You find it easy to recognise and follow the paths created across the wild by the passage of beasts and men, and to distinguish between them.

Backgrounds

All Dunlending backgrounds allow for the choice of a new Distinctive Feature: *Wild*.

New Trait: Wild

You value little the comforts of what others call civilisation and prefer to trust your instincts when you must deal with others.

1 - Forest Dweller

When you were young, your parents all but despaired of you, as you were always gone off into the hills, looking for things that were hidden. While the furthest slopes of the mountains are a frightening place when the darkness falls, you roamed there without fear, for you had learned how to read the song of every startled bird, each broken blade of grass and the crack of every old stone. The years have changed you little, though your friends swear that the wind itself must tell you secrets.

Basic Attributes: Body 3, Heart 3, Wits 7
Favoured Skill: Search
Distinctive Features
(choose two Traits from those listed)
Bold, Curious, Hardy, Nimble, Patient,
Quick of Hearing, Wary, Wild

2 - First Among Equals

Your father was a skilled orator, who roused your tribe to great deeds when necessary. You take after him, but your talents don't just reside in your speech, but rather in accomplishing what you set out to do with your obstinate resolve. You have always been an example to all those around you and therein lies the problem.

While some seek to emulate you, others have begun to declare you a dangerous influence, one that can only lead

your folk into trouble against enemies they cannot hope to oppose.

Basic Attributes: Body 4, Heart 4, Wits 5
Favoured Skill: Inspire
Distinctive Features:
(choose two Traits from those listed)
Cautious, Clever, Hardened, Hardy, Swift, Vengeful, Wild, Wilful

3 - Eye of Isengard

Many years ago, when you were young and perhaps a bit foolish, you dared to pass unobserved into the circle of Isengard on a dare from a few of your fellows. But you could not long avoid the gaze of Saruman the White. Instead of being angry at your trespass, the Wizard was impressed by your courage, and he told you to return. Over the years, the White Wizard has passed on to you some of his wisdom, asking only that you tell him of your travels, and bring news that might be of interest to him. A generous bargain, for what you've gained.

Basic Attributes: Body 4, Heart 3, Wits 6
Favoured Skill: Lore
Distinctive Features:
(choose two Traits from those listed)
Cunning, Curious, Elusive, Fierce, Gruff, Secretive, Wary, Wild

4 - Mountain Savage

The majority of the folk of Dunland live by hunting, trading, animal husbandry and simple farming – but not yours. You come from the people of the eastern heights, raiders famed for their brutal attacks and ruthless tactics, even against other Dunlendings.

As you came of age, you realised there were other ways to live than those you were raised to and set out to lead a different sort of life. The fierce warrior that lives within you, though, is never far from the surface...

Basic Attributes: Body 4, Heart 2, Wits 7
Favoured Skill: Athletics
Distinctive Features
(choose two Traits from those listed)
Bold, Fierce, Grim, Hardened, Suspicious, Vengeful, Wild, Wrathful

5 - Dwarf Friend

Your family is one among those that welcomed the exiles from the Lonely Mountain when they first arrived to Dunland as beggars at their door. Your grandfather spied the bearded strangers as they secretly practised their stonecraft or worked at the anvil, learning all he could, and then he passed his stolen craft along. You grew up singing Dwarven songs and playing with wondrous toys, and know much about the secrets of steel and stone.

Basic Attributes: Body 5, Heart 3, Wits 5
Favoured Skill: Craft
Distinctive Features:
(choose two Traits from those listed)
Clever, Cunning, Grim, Nimble, Quick of Hearing, Secretive, Wild, Wrathful

6 - Mist Child

When other folk speak of the spirits that haunt the fogs of the mountains, sometimes they are actually talking about you. Long ago, one of the greatest hunters of your tribe saw your potential and decided to teach you all she knew. She showed you the secrets of moving nearly invisibly between trees, and silently over broken stone.

Now, owl's wings scarcely make less sound than you do and you believe that the time has come to put your skills to the test outside of the fells you know.

Basic Attributes: Body 5, Heart 2, Wits 6
Favoured Skill: Stealth
Distinctive Features:
(choose two Traits from those listed)
Cautious, Elusive, Gruff, Patient, Suspicious, Swift, Wild, Wilful

Typical Names and Adventuring Age

The Folk of the Dunland Fells use names derived from their own unique tongue.

Male Names: Aedin, Aurog, Banoc, Beolain, Cael, Casferoch, Cuglas, Derc, Dumnoval, Emon, Etrer, Finsel, Imhar, Iolun, Lon, Madrach, Malduin, Nynren, Osair, Soroth, Talmach, Truis, Unthas, Veroch, Vron.

Female Names: Aeron, Ailsa, Biroth, Brina, Cleona, Coras, Dalva, Dianach, Eisa, Enith, Feidelm, Finathas, Graine, Gwya, Innas, Ivsa, Lakdar, Lewiroth, Maerbrach, Morna, Nynvia, Ralsora, Sinna, Tueren, Unna.

Adventuring Age: 16-30

Dunlendings often join raiding parties from their 16th year, but sometimes set out for adventure farther afield then instead. It is rare that they adventure beyond their forties, returning instead to life amongst their clan.

Cultural Virtues - Dunlendings

A Secret Folk

The Dunlendings fled and hid themselves...

The other Free Folk call you savage and know little of your ways, which is precisely as your people wish it to be. You have embraced the land you have been given, becoming one with the hills and woods, and you have learnt that it is always wise to keep to your own counsel and look, ever, for betrayal from others. When you make a roll to avoid being seen while outside or to detect an ambush, find a trap or discover treachery in others, you always add your Attribute score to the result as if enjoying an Attribute bonus. (This will most commonly be applied to **Stealth**, **Awareness**, **Search**, **Hunting** and **Insight** rolls).

Champion of the Hillmen

Only in Dunland did Men of this race hold to their old speech and manners...

Adventuring outside the confines of your homeland has given you a different perspective from most members of your kin. You have discovered a world that is indeed dangerous, but where warriors like you are judged by their own merits, not for the deeds of their ancestors. You have shaken off many of the false beliefs and superstitions of your folk and you are ever eager to learn more, as one day you will return to your land and bring back a treasure trove of information for your clan to profit from. Raise your maximum Hope score by 1 point. Additionally, from now on consider all your Common skills as favoured for the purpose of raising their rank. If a skill is already favoured, reduce its Advancement point cost by 1 point.

Grim of Aspect

"Most of them were ordinary men, rather tall and dark haired, and grim but not particularly evil-looking."

The path of your folk through history has been a bitter one, filled with many enemies and many unlikely allies. You have no love whatsoever for Orcs or Evil Men, yet your elders have taught you how to approach them on relatively good terms, as they say that when the world is in shadow help is found in the darkest places.

If you can approach servants of the Shadow before an armed confrontation becomes inevitable, you may interact with them using the normal rules for encounters. So long as you keep Elves and Dwarves in your company out of sight (or bound as "prisoners") most Orcs, Bandits and other foul folk will not attack you without cause.

Additionally, if you are using the rules for Eye Awareness, your individual score is considered to be equal to -1 (subtract 1 from the Starting Eye Awareness of your company).

Ill Omen

...many of the wild men paused, and looked back over their shoulders to the valley, and some looked up doubtfully at the sky.

The Forgoil say that the tongue of your folk is more akin to that of wild creatures than the speech of Men. They say so because they have forgotten what it means to be close to the earth, and how to listen to the wind, or the rain. Your folk hasn't forgot, and you can at times receive useful tidings from the sudden shift of the mountain breeze, or from the cries of birds and beasts, or from their silences.

At night, you can make a roll of **Riddle** (TN 14) to receive a sign, a foreshadowing of things to come the next day. The knowledge you gain comes in the form of a warning that you must interpret. On a success, you receive 1 bonus Success die to spend on any roll to be made in the course of the following day; you receive 2 bonus Success dice on a great success, and 3 dice on an extraordinary success. It is up to you to provide the details of the warning you received, but the Loremaster must approve its application before you may proceed to use the bonus dice. Generally, you do so when the opportunity to use the bonus Success dice arises (it is not necessary to explain the warning when you make the **Riddle** roll).

Wild Onset

"...the wild hillmen and herd-folk of Dunland ... he loosed upon us. We were overmastered. The shield-wall was broken."

You have started to favour the bloody ways of the warlike clans of the highlands, who like to rush their enemies headlong, without much concern for their own defence. When you are fighting in a Forward stance, your Damage bonus is based on your favoured Body score.

Cultural Rewards - Dunlendings

Great Forest Axe (Great Axe)

The secret to make these great axes is so ancient that it has been lost forever. Some among your elders say that the wood used to make them came from a forest that once covered all your land, from the Misty Mountains to the distant sea.

A Great Forest Axe is so well-balanced that it can be wielded by you with one hand for full effect, allowing you to use a shield as well.

Heart-seeker (Spear)

These spears are said to have been the prized possession of the first chieftains of the hill-folk, when terrible foes from beyond the Sea hunted the ancestors of the Dunlendings. Their staves are carven with ancient runes of vengeance, and their broad heads are still encrusted with the heart's blood of slain great warriors.

When you attack a living Man with a Heart-seeker, a roll of a ᚠ on the Feat die automatically causes a Wound.

Spiral Armour (Leather Armour)

Engraved with the most sacred of all the ancient symbols of the Dunlendings, this armour is said to give the greatest protection only to those worthy of it.

When you invoke an Attribute bonus on a Protection test, add as a bonus the sum of your Body and Heart ratings (in place of only your Body).

- Dwarves of the Blue Mountains -

Now they had fair halls in the mountains, and store of goods, and their days did not seem so hard, though in their songs they spoke ever of the Lonely Mountain far away.

The first Dwarves of the Ered Luin were the hardy warriors of Nogrod and Belegost, the two great mountain-cities of the First Age. Master craftsmen, and great haters of Orcs and Dragons, their power was ended when their mansions were drowned in the breaking of Beleriand.

In the twilight of the Third Age, the Dwarves of the Ered Luin are loyal subjects of the King of Durin's Folk, as their halls were founded anew when Thráin the Second led his people to these mountains after the destruction of Erebor. His son, Thorin Oakenshield, ruled here for a time and the Blue Mountains became a realm of plenty and peace, drawing wayward Dwarves from as far south as Dunland.

Though many who dwelt in the Blue Mountains have now returned to Erebor, some dwell here still. Those Dwarves who remain take special comfort and interest in restoring the relics of their past, be they ancient weapons or forgotten songs. They search the mountains for traces of their lost cities, probing deep into their roots and climbing their most remote peaks. For them, there is no greater joy than discovering runes engraved on a broken stone, or finding the entrance to a collapsed mine. And they would face any threat to wrest those jewels from the grasp of forgetfulness.

Description

The Dwarves of the Blue Mountains live a secluded life in their holds, like most members of their folk. What makes them peculiar is their relative lack of interest in those activities that other Dwarves seem to obsess over – they eschew most martial practices, and do not dedicate much of their time in the furthering of their crafts, with the exception of those skills aimed to restore and preserve the work of their ancestors.

Their style of dress is fair and elegant by Dwarven standards, as they do not feel the necessity of being ever ready to arm or work the anvil. Detailed embroidery is common on their robes and fine etching adorns their metalwork. Judging their looks, other Dwarves are quick to dismiss them as 'soft', although never to their faces.

Standard of Living

The Dwarves of the Blue Mountains have gradually grown wealthy over the years. Much of their gold comes from trade and from the ruins of abandoned holds or the reopened mines of their ancestors, patiently rediscovered and then hoarded within their vaults. As a result, their culture ranks as *Prosperous*.

Dwarven Adventurers

As a good number of their kinsfolk make the return pilgrimage to Erebor, many Dwarves of the Blue Mountains take up the call of the road and become traders, taking the East road as countless Dwarves did before. Others seek for relics of the lost kingdoms that surround them.

Suggested Callings: *Scholar, Treasure Hunter.* The Dwarves of the Blue Mountains place a great value upon their past, and they put much effort into rediscovering and preserving it. Those who leave their home for the wider world rarely forget that answers to the questions of today often can be found in the past.

Unusual Calling: *Slayer.* Though they will raise axe and shield when the need arises, the Dwarves of the Blue Mountains do not take joy in battle for its own sake.

What Bofur Says...

The words of Bofur, one of the companions of Thorin Oakenshield on the Quest for Erebor, as recorded during a visit to the Ered Luin.

- **Bardings:** "They have a past that is largely forgotten. We can teach them how to search for their lost heritage. For we know that nothing is really lost, but simply buried under the ashes of the centuries."

- **Beornings:** "They have no history, no songs to sing, no ancestors to celebrate. They are like angry children lost in the Wild."

- **Dwarves of the Blue Mountains:** "Some said of us we were no more than tomb-robbers, or even carrion-eaters, living off our dead past. They said we were content to hide here, with our dusty maps and old songs. I say to you now that if it wasn't for our maps and songs Smaug would still be sleeping upon a bed of Dwarven gold!"

- **Dwarves of the Lonely Mountain:** "Many who left the Blue Mountains to go to Erebor now look back in disdain to your modest halls, or even shed a tear thinking of how miserable they felt when they lived here in the West, among relics and bitter memories. I will not forget that we had a home here, in a time when everything seemed lost or out of our reach. I will never forget that Durin's Folk found strength and pride in the Blue Mountains."

- **Elves:** "Elves are just... Elves. When I was on the road with my father I often saw their kind go West, on their road to the havens. I used to think they were ghosts, so indifferent they were to our presence. The Elves of Wilderland are the same, just a little... wilder."

- **Hobbits of the Shire:** "Remember when everyone told jokes about their fat bellies and inability to... well, do anything? Well, think again. I have seen one killing spiders the size of boars and conversing with Dragons. I am pretty sure he isn't one of a kind."

Cultural Blessing

Dwarves of the Blue Mountains share the *Redoubtable* Cultural Blessing with their cousins from Erebor, (as described on page 48 of *The One Ring Roleplaying Game*).

Starting Skill Scores

Common Skills

Copy the following skill ranks onto the character sheet and underline the favoured skill:

Awe	0	Inspire	0	Persuade	2
Athletics	0	Travel	3	Stealth	1
Awareness	0	Insight	0	Search	3
Explore	3	Healing	0	Hunting	0
Song	2	Courtesy	0	Riddle	0
Craft	2	Battle	0	Lore	1

Weapon Skills

Choose one of the following two Weapon skill sets, and record it on the character sheet:

1) (Axes) 2, Spear 1, Dagger 1
2) Sword 2, Spear 1, Dagger 1

Specialities

Choose *two* Traits from:

Old-lore, Smith-craft, Smoking, Stone-craft, Trading, Tunnelling

Backgrounds

1 - Searching for Roots

You prefer to spend your time outside, to study the marvellous architectural achievements of your forefathers, rather than inside the workshop of your mansion, where you should learn the ways of hammer and forge. Unfortunately, many of your ancestors' greater works lie deep under the earth, or have been ground to dust in an ancient upheaval that changed the face of the world. This means that to study them you must first find them, something that often takes you many miles away from home, and for many long days.

Basic Attributes: Body 6, Heart 2, Wits 6
Favoured Skill: Explore
Distinctive Features:
(choose two Traits from those listed)
Bold, Cunning, Determined, Hardy, Secretive, Stern, Wary, Wilful

2 - Wandering Blacksmith

There is no path between the Blue Mountains and the Grey you haven't trod with your trusty boots, and there is no inn you haven't visited. You often paid for drinks and lodging with your work – every village or homestead in Eriador has a broken mill wheel, or a pony to shoe anew. From every customer you have satisfied in the four corners of

the land you have picked up a great many proverbs and rhymes, words of wisdom that will prove useful in these days of uncertainty.

Basic Attributes: Body 7, Heart 2, Wits 5
Favoured Skill: Riddle
Distinctive Features:
(choose two Traits from those listed)
Determined, Eager, Energetic, Honourable, Proud, Steadfast, Wary, Wilful

3 - Keeper of the Anvil Song

For you, the forges beneath the Blue Mountains are more than just places of crafting. There, the ringing of hammer against anvil and the hiss of cooling metal entwine with voices lifted to sing the deeds of your ancestors. You have heard ballads suited for a feast-hall, dirges for days of mourning, and marching songs to bolster the heart of a warrior and prepare him for the shedding of blood. You dream of the day when these songs won't be sung only to celebrate the past, and you hope you will be the one to bring them to the Iron Hills and Erebor itself.

Basic Attributes: Body 7, Heart 3, Wits 4
Favoured Skill: Song
Distinctive Features:
(choose two Traits from those listed)
Fierce, Gruff, Hardened, Lordly, Stern, Vengeful, Wilful, Wrathful

4 - Librarian

The innermost halls of your mansion in the Blue Mountains guard a store of lore that can be accessed thanks only to the patient work of Dwarves like you. You spend days on end, bent over ancient rolls of parchment and graven tablets, looking for the clues that will allow you to unlock the obscure ciphers you ancestors used to guard their most precious secrets. Sometimes, your task is to locate the entrance to forgotten chambers, whose existence is substantiated only by pages of half-burnt books and records.

Basic Attributes: Body 5, Heart 4, Wits 5
Favoured Skill: Search
Distinctive Features:
(choose two Traits from those listed)
Cautious, Energetic, Fierce, Hardened, Honourable, Proud, Steadfast, Wilful

5 - Eriador Trader

For over a century your father has traded with the Folk of the Shire and the Men of Bree. Trinkets and treasures of his own making decorate the Hobbit-holes of well-to-do families of Hobbiton and wealthier residents of Bree, and now that the Lonely Mountain has been reclaimed, you hope to travel farther even than he did.

Basic Attributes: Body 6, Heart 3, Wits 5
Favoured Skill: Travel
Distinctive Features:
(choose two Traits from those listed)
Cautious, Cunning, Hardy, Robust, Secretive, Suspicious, Vengeful, Wilful

6 - Provider

In the Blue Mountains, your folk never profited from the proximity of a thriving community like Dale or Esgaroth, and had always to rely on far traders and local hunters and farmers.

Your father and his father before him were accounted among the best hunters of their time, and their knowledge and skill has become your birthright. The way of the hunter is a solitary one, and is as vital to a community as that of the warrior. For when a huntsman fails, his whole family suffers.

Basic Attributes: Body 6, Heart 4, Wits 4
Favoured Skill: Hunting
Distinctive Features:
(choose two Traits from those listed)
Bold, Eager, Gruff, Lordly, Robust, Suspicious, Wilful, Wrathful

Typical Names and Adventuring Age

Close kin of the Dwarves of the Lonely Mountain, the Dwarves of the Blue Mountains also share their names and adventuring expectations. (See *The One Ring Roleplaying Game*, page 51 for more on Dwarf naming conventions and Adventuring age.)

Male Names: Anar, Beli, Bláin, Bruni, Dori, Dwalin, Farin, Flói, Frár, Ginar, Grór, Hanar, Hepti, Iari, Lófar, Lóni, Náli, Niping, Óin, Ónar, Regin, Svior, Thrór, Veig, Vidar.

Female Names: Ase, Astrid, Bergdis, Bodil, Dagna, Dís, Eir, Eydis, Frea, Fritha, Gard, Grid, Herja, Hón, Idúnn, Ingrid, Kára, Kóna, Már, Mist, Olrún, Onna, Ragni, Róta, Sigrún.

Adventuring Age: 50-100

Dwarves generally start their life on the road in their fifties, and do not usually consider retiring before their nineties.

Cultural Virtues - Dwarves of the Blue Mountains

Dwarves of the Blue Mountains Dwarves may choose the new Virtue described below, as well as the following ones listed on pages 107-108 of *The One Ring Roleplaying Game*: *Broken Spells, Durin's Way, Old Hatred, The Stiff Neck of Dwarves*. (The *Deep Songs* Virtue replaces the *Ravens of the Mountain* Virtue.)

Deep Songs

> ...the music began all at once, so sudden and sweet that Bilbo forgot everything else, and was swept away into dark lands under strange moons...

Strange as it might seem to others, music comes easily to your folk. You have practiced your instrument long enough that you now know how to bring out your innermost desires and aspirations.

During a Fellowship phase, if you choose the *Heal Corruption* undertaking using **Song**, you lower the difficulty of the roll by one level (TN -2) for you and for any other companion choosing the same undertaking in the same location. Additionally, if your roll was successful, you begin each session of the next Adventuring phase adding 1 additional point to the Fellowship pool.

Cultural Rewards - Dwarves of the Blue Mountains

Dwarves of the Blue Mountains may pick the new Cultural Reward described below, as well as the following ones listed on pages 117 of *The One Ring Roleplaying Game*: *Helm of Awe* and *Dwarf-wrought Hauberk*. (The *Harp of the Halls* Reward replaces the *Axe of Azanulbizar* Cultural Reward.)

Harp of the Halls

You have been rewarded with one of the finest harps crafted in the Blue Mountains. Their sweet music is beautiful to all ears, even those who do not normally hold the music of Dwarves in high regard.

You may use the Harp of the Halls outside of combat, when making a roll using **Song**, **Courtesy** or **Inspire**. When you do so, roll the Feat die twice and keep the best result. Additionally, you enjoy a bonus of +1 to Standing.

- Dwarves of the Grey Mountains -

But there were dragons in the wastes beyond; and after many years they became strong again and multiplied, and they made war on the Dwarves, and plundered their works.

Long ago, when Durin's Folk fled from Moria, many went north into the Grey Mountains. There they found great riches and new wealth, and for a time the Dwarves prospered in their mountain holds. But soon Dragons came from the Withered Heath and, with the death of King Dáin I, the Dwarves were forced to abandon their domains.

Today there is no Dwarven kingdom remaining in the Grey Mountains, only cold caverns and ruined halls. Those descendants of Dáin I who didn't go east to the Iron Hills or back to Erebor scratch out a living as wandering craftsmen and traders in Wilderland. With no forge of their own, they take work where they can find it, but always look north to the lost realm of their ancestors. There lie the graves of their forefathers and every Dwarf who takes to the road longs for the day when they can return home and restore glory to the halls of their fathers.

Now that Smaug is dead, the Dwarves of the Grey Mountains look to their kinsmen under the Mountain and the Iron Hills with renewed hope. For they recognise that before them lies a land where the veil of shadow has started to lift, and many believe this to be the turning of the tide. They are no longer satisfied to cower in the cracks of the earth. Now they take to the road with a purpose: they seek to restore their place in the world and glory to their lost kingdom.

Description

The lean and travel-worn Dwarves of the Grey Mountains have a dour look about them and suspicion ever in their eyes, but when approached prove to be the most gracious of all those belonging to Durin's Folk, a politeness that is probably due to their knowledge of the ways of many lands. Often bent over with toil, they sometimes seem slightly shorter than their kin – though when they stand tall their Longbeard ancestry reveals itself, especially in their proud noses and piercing eyes.

Typically, the Dwarves of the Grey Mountains carry the tools of their craft with them at almost all times, ever ready for the next opportunity to ply their trade. When they do go to war, they seem to favour the same instruments they use when working, as they wield mattocks and stout axes of blackened iron.

Standard of Living

Living a life of constant travel and trade has not allowed for the Dwarves of the Grey Mountains to accumulate great hoards of wealth. As such they are considered to have a *Frugal* standard of living.

Dwarven Adventurers

With a great number of Goblins and Orcs slain in the Battle of Five Armies, many Dwarves of the Grey Mountains now take to the road with more in mind than simply earning their living working as wandering blacksmiths or miners. Indeed, they see themselves as the first in a line of adventurers who will dare to reclaim their ancestral holds in the north.

Suggested Callings: *Slayer, Wanderer.* The Dwarves of the Grey Mountains have lost much, and haven't found a new home to replace the one they lost. So, they look forward to the day they will be able to bring their curses back to those who chased them out of their kingdom. In the meantime, many go up and down the lands, seeing what other folks have accomplished, but never forgetting their stolen heritage.

Unusual Calling: *Warden.* Being a hardy and solitary folk, the Dwarves of the Grey Mountains seldom rise to become great leaders or charismatic rulers. Indeed, there has been no lord among them since Dáin I fell in battle almost four hundred years ago.

What Balin Son of Fundin Says...

- **Bardings:** "The Men of Dale are Dwarf-friends, hearty and true to their word. Their line endured under the shadow of the Dragon for many lives of Men, and we profited much from their friendship."

- **Dwarves of the Grey Mountains:** "I am a Dwarf of the Grey Mountains by lineage myself and I tell you that you are not exiles, as your birthright is your blood. And your blood will never forget that you once claimed the Grey Mountains as your domain, as we once ruled the Misty Mountains from the Dwarrowdelf, the great city that is now called the Black Pit."

- **Dwarves of the Iron Hills:** "All Dwarves owe an inextinguishable debt to the Dwarves of the Iron Hills. For they toiled under the earth as we all wandered the land, wronged by our friends and dispossessed by our enemies. They put the iron in our steel, making sure that the Axes of the Dwarves do not lose their edge."

- **Dwarves of the Lonely Mountain:** "In Erebor we achieved what was considered impossible. Today, we reap the bountiful fruits of a new Golden Age. But the shadows cast by the brightest light are deepest, and we must beware."

- **Elves of Mirkwood:** "I cannot forget the small stone room where I was imprisoned under the Halls of the Elvenking, a most uncomfortable lodging. Yet, the Elves of Mirkwood have done much to improve my opinion of them, and I am inclined to think that they might prove useful should you endeavour to reclaim your lost mansions."

- **Beornings and Woodmen of Wilderland:** "As is the case with all their kindred, among the Men of the vales of Anduin are individuals of noble spirit, mingled with thieves and liars. For all Men desire gold, and the power that treasure brings."

Cultural Blessing

Dwarves of the Grey Mountains share the *Redoubtable* Cultural Blessing with their cousins from Erebor (see *The One Ring Roleplaying Game*, page 48).

Starting Skill Scores

Common Skills

Copy the following skill ranks onto the character sheet and underline the favoured skill:

Awe	0	Inspire	1	Persuade	2
Athletics	0	Travel	3	Stealth	1
Awareness	0	Insight	0	Search	1
Explore	2	Healing	1	Hunting	1
Song	1	Courtesy	2	Riddle	1
Craft	3	Battle	0	Lore	1

Weapon Skills

Choose one of the following two Weapon skill sets, and record it on the character sheet:

1) (Axes) 2, Short Sword 1, Dagger 1
2) Mattock 2, Short Sword 1, Dagger 1

Specialities

Choose two Traits from:

Fire-making, Mountaineer, Smith-craft, Stone-craft, Trading, Tunnelling

Backgrounds

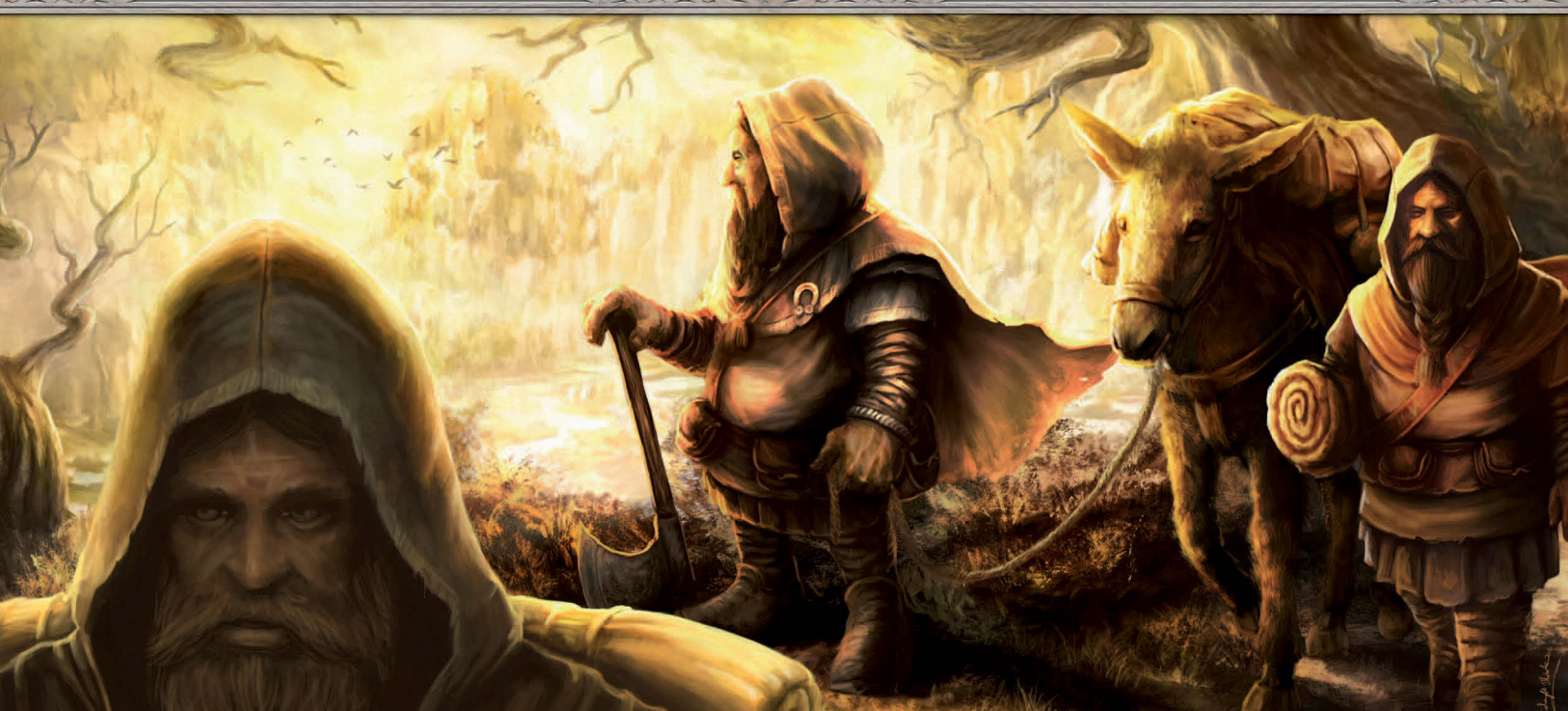
1 - Survivor of the Darkness

You spent many long years hiding in the caves of the Grey Mountains, skulking and sneaking. The Goblin armies and Orc hordes were too numerous for even your brave kin to challenge in open battle. Instead, you dwelt secretly beside them in darkness. In the aftermath of the Battle of Five Armies, you have stepped out of the shadows and returned to the world.

Basic Attributes: Body 6, Heart 2, Wits 6
Favoured Skill: Stealth
Distinctive Features:
(choose two Traits from those listed)
Cautious, Cunning, Hardy, Secretive, Stern, Vengeful, Wary, Wilful

2 - Kin-less

They came in the night, an ambush. The barbed arrows of the Goblins bit deep, and you still bear those scars to this day. You fled, to your continued shame, and hid in the secret caves of your folk. You waited for days until you were well enough to begin a search. You did not have to look long, at the foot of the Grey Mountains, you found the corpses of your kin on gruesome display. But one Dwarf yet still draws breath, and they will be avenged.



Basic Attributes: Body 7, Heart 2, Wits 5
Favoured Skill: Awe
Distinctive Features:
(choose two Traits from those listed)
Cautious, Energetic, Fierce, Hardened, Honourable, Proud, Steadfast, Wilful

3 - Grizzled Soldier

Many times you have heard tell the tales of how your ancestors lost their mansions in their wars against the Worms of the North and how their struggle was hopeless. You do not doubt that the might of a Cold Drake is beyond your strength, but you know that the challenge is certainly something you would not shy away from. Your words bolster the spirit of the youngest among your folk, and prepare them for the tests the darkening of the Age is bringing upon you.

Basic Attributes: Body 7, Heart 3, Wits 4
Favoured Skill: Inspire
Distinctive Features:
(choose two Traits from those listed)
Bold, Determined, Eager, Gruff, Lordly, Robust, Wilful, Wrathful

4 - Wandering Merchant

Long have the crafts of your kin remained hidden and unknown to the Free People of Wilderland. Now the roads are beginning to reopen and songs are being sung again of the great market of Dale. You followed in the footsteps of your forefathers, hoping to see your creations sold in the markets across Wilderland.

Basic Attributes: Body 5, Heart 4, Wits 5
Favoured Skill: Persuade
Distinctive Features:
(choose two Traits from those listed)
Determined, Eager, Energetic, Honourable, Proud, Steadfast, Wary, Wilful

5 - Lessons from the Past

It is not out of simple respect that the Dwarves honour their ancestors. The devotion your people pay to those who came before you recognises that every Dwarf is but a cog in a complex machine that has allowed you to prosper through countless centuries. Knowledge of that is vital for the prosperity of your folk, something the Dwarves of the Grey Mountains possibly forgot at the height of their power. Ignorance of the lore of the Dwarves is a sin you won't commit.

Basic Attributes: Body 6, Heart 3, Wits 5
Favoured Skill: Lore
Distinctive Features:
(choose two Traits from those listed)
Cunning, Gruff, Hardy, Robust, Secretive, Stern, Suspicious, Wilful

6 - Sleeping with one Eye Open

Wilderland is dangerous, and filled with enemies. Smaug may be dead, but other greedy monsters lurk in the shadow of Mirkwood and beyond the mountain ranges of the North. The Dwarves have already suffered the consequences of ignoring that the Folk of Durin have few friends, if any at all. When the time comes and you take the road, you will choose a path leading you headfirst into danger. For it is good to know precisely where your foes lie.

Basic Attributes: Body 6, Heart 4, Wits 4
Favoured Skill: Awareness
Distinctive Features:
(choose two Traits from those listed)
Bold, Fierce, Hardened, Lordly, Suspicious, Vengeful, Wilful, Wrathful

Typical Names and Adventuring Age

Close kin of the Dwarves of the Lonely Mountain, the Dwarves of the Grey Mountains also share their names and adventuring expectations. (See *The One Ring Roleplaying Game*, page 51 for more on Dwarf naming conventions and Adventuring age.)

Male Names: Anar, Beli, Bláin, Bruni, Dori, Dwalin, Farin, Flói, Frár, Ginar, Grór, Hanar, Hepti, Iari, Lófar, Lóni, Náli, Niping, Óin, Ónar, Regin, Svior, Thrór, Veig, Vidar.

Female Names: Ase, Astrid, Bergdis, Bodil, Dagna, Dís, Eir, Eydis, Frea, Fritha, Gard, Grid, Herja, Hón, Idúnn, Ingrid, Kára, Kóna, Már, Mist, Olrún, Onna, Ragni, Róta, Sigrún.

Adventuring Age: 50-100

Dwarves generally start their life on the road in their fifties, and do not usually consider retiring before their nineties.

Cultural Virtues - Dwarves of the Grey Mountains

Dwarves of the Grey Mountains may pick the new Virtue described below, as well as the following ones listed on pages 107-108 of *The One Ring Roleplaying Game*: *Broken Spells, Durin's Way, Old Hatred, The Stiff Neck of Dwarves*. (The *Dark for Dark Business* Virtue replaces the *Ravens of the Mountain* Virtue.)

Dark for Dark Business

'We like the dark,' said the dwarves. 'Dark for dark business! There are many hours before dawn.'

You often have been forced to find sanctuary in cold and lightless caves, to hide from your enemies. In time, your senses have become keen and you are comfortable in even the deepest darkness.

If you are making a roll using **Awareness** while in the dark (at night, underground, or in deep forest), you roll the Feat die twice and keep the best result.

Cultural Rewards - Dwarves of the Grey Mountains

Dwarves of the Grey Mountains may pick the new Cultural Reward described below, as well as the following ones listed on pages 117 of *The One Ring Roleplaying Game: Dwarf-wrought Hauberk, Helm of Awe*. (The *Worm Axe* Reward replaces the *Axe of Azanulbizar* Cultural Reward.)

Worm Axe (great axe)

A Worm Axe is a double-headed weapon used by the Dwarves in their wars against the Dragons. Its hooked end is held capable of biting into the armoured skin of a Great Worm.

When you are attacking a foe with a scaled skin (a Dragon, or a Troll, for example) using a Worm Axe, the roll of a ᚠ loosens a scale exposing a weak spot: in the following round, should you or your companions hit your foe with a Piercing Blow, the creature would roll a maximum of one Success die for Protection.

- Dwarves of the Iron Hills -

With cries of "Moria!" and "Dáin, Dáin!" the Dwarves of the Iron Hills plunged in... Panic came upon the Goblins.

Beyond the Waste, where the river Redwater runs swiftly south, rise the Iron Hills, the old kingdom of Dáin Ironfoot. Named thusly because their roots were rich in the metals of martial craftsmanship, they are the home of a hardy breed of Dwarves, survivors who left the Grey Mountains almost five hundred years ago under the leadership of Grór. For centuries the Dwarves of the Iron Hills have toiled in deep places under the earth, in dark mines and brightly lit smithies, and the sound of their hammers striking anvils has never ceased to ring in the surrounding dales and valleys.

Today, the Iron Hills have a new ruler. Dáin Ironfoot is now King under the Mountain, and the best part of his folk followed him to Erebor when he took the throne. His young son, Thorin Stonehelm, remained behind to act as a steward to the King. He currently rules over Dáin's old abode, in the company of his most trusted warriors and retainers, and of those who chose not to leave their ancient homes to go west and rebuild the kingdom under the Lonely Mountain.

The remaining Dwarves of the Iron Hills are for the most part very much like their young ruler, a proud and stern folk, and among them are warriors who have seen many wars. Though they are not as rich in treasure as are their kin in Erebor, they take great pride in their smith-craft, especially in the making of weapons and armour.

Description

The Dwarves of the Iron Hills live the simple but harsh life of miners and smiths. They are often gruff and terse when dealing with outsiders, as choosing to remain on the far eastern edge of the Wild has made them short-spoken, short-tempered and often quick to seek out a physical solution when a threat arises.

More pragmatic than their cousins in Erebor, when they are on the move they wear simple and functional clothes, never carrying anything more than what necessity requires. But when they march to war, the gear they carry betrays their long tradition of a battle-hardened warrior race. The Dwarves of the Iron Hills often sport long, forked beards, plaited and thrusted into their belts when they travel, fight or work the forge.

Standard of Living

What lies under the roots of the Iron Hills cannot compare to the wealth in precious stones and gold that rests below Erebor. The death of the Dragon has improved the trade between the Iron Hills and the lands to the west, but the eastern Dwarves remain much poorer than their western cousins. Because of this, their culture ranks as *Martial*.

Dwarven Adventurers

The majority of denizens of the Iron Hills are too focused on their smithcraft to ever contemplate leaving their workshops and take up a life of adventure; their latest undertakings seem always unfinished to them, or there is always a new forging technique to experiment with. But the great achievements of their neighbours in Erebor are prompting more and more young Dwarves to take the road and go to see with their own eyes what the King under the Mountain has accomplished in a handful of years.

Finally, the truly noble among them, and the most superstitious, believe that the death of Smaug could mean that greater, darker threats may soon come and they would cut the head from such sleeping darkness before it awakens.

Suggested Callings: *Slayer, Warden.* The Dwarves of the Iron Hills count on great strength of arms and toughness of fibre in most endeavours. They rarely forget a slight or insult, and many of them seek to follow in the armour-clad steps of their warlike ancestors.

Unusual Calling: *Wanderer.* So martially minded are they that the Dwarves of the Iron Hills have neither the time nor the dedication to roam the land and find what beauty remains in Middle-earth in this age of twilight.

What Thorin Stonehelm Says...

- **Bardings:** "The heirs of Girion have lived under the shadow of a Dragon, and that makes them close to us, as our folk long suffered what they suffered. But Men oft forget the lessons of old, and while they are stout of heart, I fear their blades will dull and their armour rust as the glory of Dale is restored."

- **Beornings:** "Their chieftain, Beorn, saved my namesake, Thorin Oakenshield, from the butchery our enemies would have inflicted upon him when he fell at the Battle of Five Armies. I hope one day the folk of Durin will be able to repay him. Until that day, we will honour Beorn and those who follow him with our trust and respect."

- **Dwarves of the Iron Hills:** "Though we choose not to dwell in Erebor, still we are loyal to the King under the Mountain. Should darkness rise again, our mattocks are ready and our shields are broad. The Enemy has only to look to the east and tremble!"

- **Dwarves of the Lonely Mountain:** "Our cousins. Our kin. Our king."

- **Elves of Mirkwood:** "When he took the throne of Erebor, my father Dáin restored the emeralds of Girion to the Elvenking. Will he ever repay such gesture in kind? I doubt this, for the immortal Elves seem quick to forget when it is not in their best interest to remember..."

- **Woodmen of Wilderland:** "I can say little of them, save only that they survive in the darkness of that foul forest and that speaks to their merit."

Cultural Blessing

Dwarves of the Iron Hills share the *Redoubtable* Cultural Blessing with their cousins from Erebor (as described on page 48 of *The One Ring Roleplaying Game*).

Starting Skill Scores

Common Skills

Copy the following skill ranks onto the character sheet and underline the favoured skill:

Awe	1	Inspire	1	Persuade	0
Athletics	0	Travel	2	Stealth	3
Awareness	0	Insight	1	Search	3
Explore	0	Healing	0	Hunting	0
Song	0	Courtesy	0	Riddle	1
Craft	3	Battle	2	Lore	1

Weapon Skills

Choose one of the following two Weapon skill sets, and record it on the character sheet:

1) (Axes) 2, Spear 1, Dagger 1
2) Mattock 2, Short Sword 1, Dagger 1

Specialities

Choose two Traits from:

Fire-making, Smith-craft, Smoking, Stone-craft, Trading, Tunnelling

Backgrounds

1 - Teller of Tales

Always one to relate tales of the mighty at the hearth, or to raise spirits at the coalface, you prosper by the quickness of your wits and the keenness of your tongue. You know that a well-turned phrase can be as sharp as a mattock's edge or as useful as a cunningly wrought keystone. More taciturn than the tellers of ribald stories known to other folk beyond the Dwarf-halls, you can be wry and witty nonetheless.

Basic Attributes: Body 6, Heart 2, Wits 6
Favoured Skill: Riddle
Distinctive Features:
(choose two Traits from those listed)
Bold, Cunning, Energetic, Lordly, Proud, Vengeful, Wilful, Wrathful

2- Master Craftsman

The arms and armour of your people are legendary and you have long toiled at your forge. Whenever you could, however, you took to the road to see that your forge-craft is tested in battle and to teach younger Dwarves the great art of your people. You know that one day you will rest in the halls of your ancestors, but your craft and the craft of your kinsmen will live on forever.

Basic Attributes: Body 7, Heart 2, Wits 5
Favoured Skill: Travel
Distinctive Features:
(choose two Traits from those listed)
Cautious, Hardy, Honourable, Robust, Secretive, Steadfast, Wary, Wilful

3 - Veteran of the Battle of Five Armies

You recall when the raven arrived and summoned you on the long march to Erebor. You fought bravely beside your kin and after the battle was over, glory and honour were heaped upon the Dwarves of the Iron Hills. But you remain a soldier and now that the Lonely Mountain has been restored, you know your place is in the Wild, keeping the shadow at bay.

Basic Attributes: Body 7, Heart 3, Wits 4
Favoured Skill: Inspire
Distinctive Features:
(choose two Traits from those listed)
Determined, Eager, Energetic, Fierce, Gruff, Hardened, Wilful, Wrathful

4 - Emissary of King Dáin

Now that there is once more a King under the Mountain, there are many who wish to hear his voice and know his will. Since the death of Thorin, you have acted as a messenger for King Dáin, travelling across Wilderland to assure that the will of your lord and the safety of Erebor are maintained. Many who have met you are surprised to find you eloquent, for a Dwarf. Yet you know there comes a time when axes must do where words have failed.

Basic Attributes: Body 5, Heart 4, Wits 5
Favoured Skill: Persuade
Distinctive Features:
(choose two Traits from those listed)
Cautious, Cunning, Honourable, Proud, Secretive, Steadfast, Stern, Wilful

5 - Veteran Miner

You spent the earlier part of your life deep underground, in the seemingly endless mine tunnels that lie beneath the Iron Hills. Hard work and harder conditions have made you strong of arm and relentless of purpose, and no amount of toil can dint your spirits. During what now seems a whole lifetime, you have witnessed both the triumph of skill and determination, as well as the folly of delving too deep, too fast.

Basic Attributes: Body 6, Heart 3, Wits 5
Favoured Skill: Athletics
Distinctive Features:
(choose two Traits from those listed)
Determined, Fierce, Gruff, Hardy, Lordly, Suspicious, Wary, Wilful.

6 - Merchant Adventurer

In your wandering far from home you have brought what your folk have to offer to where it can be traded for the goods your people need. Wise in the ways of the world beyond the mine and the forge, you have come to favour a life beneath the sky and the open road. Wilderland is full of opportunities for those willing to strike a bargain, sign a contract and embark on a task others may regard as too perilous.

Basic Attributes: Body 6, Heart 4, Wits 4
Favoured Skill: Courtesy
Distinctive Features:
(choose two Traits from those listed)
Bold, Eager, Hardened, Robust, Stern, Suspicious, Vengeful, Wilful

Typical Names and Adventuring Age

Close kin of the Dwarves of the Lonely Mountain, the Dwarves of the Iron Hills also share their names and adventuring expectations. (See *The One Ring Roleplaying Game*, page 51 for more on Dwarf naming conventions and Adventuring age.)

Male Names: Anar, Beli, Bláin, Bruni, Dori, Dwalin, Farin, Flói, Frár, Ginar, Grór, Hanar, Hepti, Iari, Lófar, Lóni, Náli, Niping, Óin, Ónar, Regin, Svior, Thrór, Veig, Vidar.

Female Names: Ase, Astrid, Bergdis, Bodil, Dagna, Dís, Eir, Eydis, Frea, Fritha, Gard, Grid, Herja, Hón, Idúnn, Ingrid, Kára, Kóna, Már, Mist, Olrún, Onna, Ragni, Róta, Sigrún.

Adventuring Age: 50-100

Dwarves generally start their life on the road in their fifties, and do not usually consider retiring before their nineties.

Cultural Virtues - Dwarves of the Iron Hills

Dwarves of the Iron Hills may pick the new Virtue described below, as well as the following ones listed on pages 107-108 of *The One Ring Roleplaying Game: Broken Spells, Durin's Way, Old Hatred, The Stiff Neck of Dwarves*. (The *Sworn Allegiance* Virtue replaces the *Ravens of the Mountain* Virtue.)

Sworn Allegiance

"We are hastening to our kinsmen in the Mountain, since we learn that the kingdom of old is renewed."

You do not give your trust to others easily, but when it happens, the bond that is formed is so strong that you treat your friends as kinsmen. If your Fellowship focus didn't become Wounded, Poisoned or Miserable, or wasn't otherwise seriously harmed, at the end of a session you recover 2 points of Hope instead of 1 (see page 132 to 134 of *The One Ring Roleplaying Game*). Additionally, if your Fellowship focus is a fellow Dwarf, raise the company's Fellowship rating by 1 point.

Cultural Rewards - Dwarves of the Iron Hills

Dwarves of the Iron Hills may pick the new Cultural Reward described below, as well as the following ones listed on pages 117 of *The One Ring Roleplaying Game: Axe of Azanulbizar, Helm of Awe*. (The *Ironfoot Hauberk* Reward replaces the *Dwarf-wrought Hauberk* Cultural Reward.)

Ironfoot Hauberk (mail armour)

The ancient weaponsmiths of your folk possessed the secret of forging a hauberk of steel mail, made of a fine and flexible mesh that is especially comfortable and lightweight (for a suit of metal armour).

When you are on a journey wearing an Ironfoot Hauberk, you roll one additional Success die (to a maximum of six Success dice) whenever you are required to make a **Travel** test. Additionally, you may spend a point of Hope to change an result you get on a **Travel** roll into a instead.

- Elves of Lórien -

"But we hear that Lórien is not yet deserted, for there is a secret power here that holds evil from the land. Nevertheless its folk are seldom seen, and maybe they dwell now deep in the woods and far from the northern border."

Between the Misty Mountains and the River Anduin is the woodland realm of Lothlórien. Founded in a time before the memory of Man, the Golden Wood is a stronghold and a sanctuary still basking in the glory of the Elves of old. Yet the very existence of Lothlórien is a reminder of all that the Firstborn have lost, for it is preserved solely by the power of the Lady of the Galadhrim, frozen as though it were a mayfly trapped in amber. While Lothlórien endures, unchanging, all around it fades and crumbles.

The fair folk who make their home here are ruled by the Lord Celeborn and Galadriel, the Lady of Lórien. Also known as the Galadhrim, the 'tree-people', they are kindred of the denizens of Northern Mirkwood, even though they have long been sundered from them. For they are a secretive people, now dwelling in the heart of the forest, shunning dealings with any other folk and ever vigilant against intruders. No Orc comes within leagues of their borders without falling under their watchful eyes and no one may enter their realm without the assent of its Lord and Lady.

Anyone allowed to cross the rivers protecting the land of Lórien, they would hear their songs of celebration and lamentation echo through the forest and see sharp eyes gaze outward only for signs of intruders. Those rare few amongst them who cross the wood's borders do so only at great need, and when they do they carry with them a legacy of grace and beauty that is no longer found elsewhere in Middle-earth.

Description

Very much like the Elves of Mirkwood, the Elves of Lórien fear the encroaching darkness that is surrounding their realm. To outsiders they appear aloof and unconcerned, for their eyes are always gazing upon something only they can see: the slow darkening of all that is fair in Middle-earth outside their blessed land. For most of them the world will never again be as it was of old, and they celebrate the passing of its beauty in their speech and song. They dress in elegant simplicity, mingling raiment of silver and gold. When they are set to the task of travel and warfare, they favour light armament, garbed in pale greys or other colours that easily blend into their surroundings.

Standard of Living

The Elves of the Golden Wood have little value for material wealth. Instead they place a greater virtue in the lore of the ages and the gifts of the land. But they are not without comfort and appreciate that which can be crafted by their hands and made fairer still by their work. As a result their culture is considered *Prosperous*.

Elves of Lórien Adventurers

The Elves of Lórien only rarely step beyond the bounds of their realm to take up the road, unless it is for the gathering of tidings or the watching of their enemies. When they do it is often at the direct command of the Lord Celeborn or the Lady Galadriel. Still, when they leave, their hearts dwell ever in the Golden Wood and they can often be seen looking wistfully back towards their homeland. They regard the wider world as strange, often encountering difficulties understanding the conflict around them; but make for fair-hearted companions whose vigilance against the servants of the Enemy is beyond doubt.

Suggested Callings: *Scholar. Warden.* The Elves of Lórien care to remember and celebrate the world that came before them in song and lore, as much as they see to the continued protection of their folk, patrolling the borders of the Golden Wood.

Unusual Calling: *Wanderer.* The Elves of Lórien do not take to the roads of Middle-earth idly, instead preferring to remain within their Lady's realm. When they do leave it is often to accomplish a specific task, and they hasten on their way so as to return all the sooner.

What Celeborn, the Lord of Lórien says...

- **Beornings:** "The Men of the Anduin Vale are all the same to us. They live short and brutal lives. But their chieftain is of a different sort, and he is teaching his folk his wiser ways. May he live long enough to see his efforts bear fruit."

- **Dwarves of the Lonely Mountain:** "We have not had dealings with Durin's Folk since the Dark Days. They are not permitted in our land, except with my leave. And I do not give it easily."

- **Elves of Lórien:** "Nowhere in Middle-earth is the heritage of our kin preserved untouched and unspoiled as it is in Lothlórien. Here no shadow lies, as long as we keep watch over the wood's borders, and the power of the Lady of the Galadhrim defends us."

- **Elves of Mirkwood:** "It is many years since our kin in Mirkwood journeyed here, although our forests once were but one. Long has a Shadow lain across their land; it is all we can hope that it has not tainted their hearts as well as their trees."

- **Riders of Rohan:** "The sons of Eorl are wise but unlearned. They call our land *Dwimordene*, the 'vale of phantoms', out of fear, not knowing that they come closer to the truth than we would like it to be."

- **Woodmen of Wilderland:** "So sad a fate to watch these Men survive under the oppression of the Enemy. We can only hope they have the strength to survive the rising darkness. It is a blessing that Radagast the Brown has chosen to dwell among them."

Cultural Blessing

The Elves of Lórien share the *Folk of the Dusk* Cultural Blessing with their cousins from Mirkwood.

Starting Skill Scores

Common Skills

Copy the following skill ranks onto the character sheet and underline the favoured skill:

Awe	1	Inspire	0	Persuade	0
Athletics	3	Travel	0	Stealth	2
Awareness	2	Insight	0	Search	0
Explore	0	Healing	0	Hunting	1
Song	2	Courtesy	2	Riddle	0
Craft	2	Battle	0	Lore	3

Weapon Skills

Choose one of the following two Weapon skill sets, and record it on the character sheet:

1) (Bows) 2, Spear 1, Dagger 1
2) Sword 2, Bow 1, Dagger 1

Specialities

Choose two traits from:

Boating, Elven-lore, Lórien-lore, Smith-craft, Swimming, Woodwright

Backgrounds

1 - Elf-warden

You have walked the borders of the Golden Wood since you were young, observing the incessant watch of the wardens entrusted with the protection of the realm. Inspired by their resolve, you trained and grew watchful and swift. Now you wait for the day when the Lord and Lady of the Galadhrim will command you to cross the rivers to bring aid to any who would stand against the Enemy.

Basic Attributes: Body 5, Heart 2, Wits 7
Favoured Skill: Awareness
Distinctive Features:
(choose two traits from those listed)
Curious, Elusive, Just, Keen-eyed, Nimble, Patient, Quick of Hearing, Swift

2 - Keeper of the Silver Springs

Many fountains send white streams running across the gold lawns of Lothlórien. It has been your charge since many years to watch over the springs of your land, and though you find peace in tending these waters, you often feel the voice of Nimrodel singing of rivers running beyond the Golden Wood, into lands you would dearly love to see.

Basic Attributes: Body 5, Heart 4, Wits 5
Favoured Skill: Healing
Distinctive Features:
(choose two Traits from those listed)
Eager, Fair, Generous, Keen-eyed, Proud, Quick of Hearing, Secretive, Trusty

3 - Talan Runner

Swift and sure on your feet, you run nimbly between the flets built high in the boughs of the mallorn trees, carrying news and rumours wherever they are needed. Yet on some occasions, your swift feet carry you much farther afield, as you are sent to gather tidings of lands outside the forest.

Basic Attributes: Body 5, Heart 3, Wits 6
Favoured Skill: Athletics
Distinctive Features:
(choose two Traits from those listed)
Adventurous, Curious, Generous, Just, Keen-eyed, Merry, Nimble, Trusty

4 - Voice of the Lord and Lady

The Lord and Lady of the Galadhrim have seldom left the Golden Wood and only in the most dire of circumstances, so you have been sent out in their stead as an emissary to carry their word and their will to other lands. Invested with authority and displaying a bearing and dignity worthy of the Elder Days, you act as their voice and their eyes in lands beyond the sight of Lórien.

Basic Attributes: Body 4, Heart 4, Wits 6
Favoured Skill: Awe
Distinctive Features:
(choose two Traits from those listed)
Clever, Determined, Eager, Fair-spoken, Keen-eyed, Lordly, Merciful, Patient

5 - Swan Ship Sailor

The majority of your folk look at the rivers traversing your land as a defence. To you, the waters of Celebrant and Anduin have always looked like roads, extending beyond the keenest of sights. That is why you prefer to tread the wooden deck of a boat than that of a *talan* atop the trees. For one day you will let the currents bring you where they may, beyond the golden boughs of Lórien.

Basic Attributes: Body 4, Heart 3, Wits 7
Favoured Skill: Travel
Distinctive Features:
(choose two Traits from those listed)
Adventurous, Honourable, Keen-eyed, Merciful, Merry, Proud, Secretive, Swift

6 - Keeper of Ancient Lore

In Lothlórien, industrious hands craft elegant things from metal and wood, jewels and silk. The secrets of their making is centuries old, and amount to a wealth of knowledge that is a treasure unto itself. You delight in hearing the ancient craftsmen talk about their art, or reading about the work of those ancient masters that left Middle-earth to sail West.

Basic Attributes: Body 6, Heart 2, Wits 6
Favoured Skill: Lore
Distinctive Features:
(choose two Traits from those listed)
Clever, Determined, Elusive, Fair, Fair-spoken, Honourable, Keen-eyed, Lordly

Typical Names and Adventuring Age

Close kin of the Elves of Mirkwood, the Elves of Lórien also share their names and adventuring expectations. (See The One Ring Roleplaying Game, page 58 for more on Elf naming conventions and Adventuring age.)

Male Names: Amras, Aredhel, Beleganor, Belegon, Calanhir, Carmagor, Dagorhir, Durandir, Edrahil, Ellahir, Fincalan, Fuindor, Galdagor, Galdor, Hallas, Hirimlad, Ithildir, Lascalan, Linaith, Mablin, Malanor, Nauros, Orgalad, Pelegorn, Sargon.

Female Names: Anwen, Arbereth, Berúthiel, Baraniel, Calanril, Celenneth, Elnîth, Eraniel, Finduilas, Gilraen, Gilraeth, Gloredhel, Idril, Ioreth, Ivorwen, Lôrwend, Lothíriel, Luindîs, Meneloth, Moriel, Morwen, Narieth, Narniel, Orothêl, Tarandîs.

Adventuring Age: 100-500

Elves are invulnerable to age, and may become adventurers at any time after they reach adulthood (at about a century of age).

Cultural Virtues - Elves of Lórien

The Elves of Lórien are not so far removed from their kindred of Mirkwood, but in the long history of the Golden Wood many Elves of nobler lineage came to dwell within its borders. As a result, the folk of Lórien is accounted to be less wild than their northern brethren, and wiser.

Elves of Lórien may choose their Virtues among those described below, as well as the following ones listed on pages 108-109 of *The One Ring Roleplaying Game*: *Deadly Archery, Elvish Dreams, The Speakers*. (The *Waybread of the Elves* and *Favour of the Lady* replace the *Wood-elf Magic* and *Shadow Bane* Virtues.)

Waybread of the Elves

'It fed the will, and it gave strength to endure, and to master sinew and limb beyond the measure of mortal kind.'

Lembas appears as thin wafers wrapped in leaves, and can be compared to cram, or to the honey-cakes of the Beornings, for it is a type of waybread, created to be consumed when all else fails. You have mastered the art of preparing lembas, and can bake it for the consumption of all members of your company, should they require it.

During a Fellowship phase, if you choose the *Heal Corruption* undertaking using **Craft** and roll a success, you equip your company with the waybread of the Elves: begin the next Adventuring phase with an additional pool of Fellowship points usable exclusively during journeys, equal to your Wisdom score on a success, or twice that amount on a great or extraordinary success.

Favour of the Lady

'As they were healed of hurt and weariness of body the grief of their loss grew more keen.'

When you left your home to go adventuring you realised for the first time how keenly you would have missed walking among the trees of your woodland realm. In Lórien, the sun shines for days on end, save for those evenings when a soft rain falls gently, refreshing all things and making all colours vibrant and crisp. Now the Lady of the Galadhrim has bestowed her blessing upon you, to assist you when you return from your journeys in the outer world.

Raise your maximum Hope score by 2 points. Additionally, when you return to Lórien for a Year's End Fellowship phase, you may recover your full Hope score at the cost of gaining 1 permanent Shadow point.

Cultural Rewards - Elves of Lórien

The things created by the Elves of Lórien possess the quality of their twilight land – they are beautiful and enduring, for the hands that crafted them have been guided by the wisdom of the Lady of the Galadhrim.

Elven Cloak

These cloaks were made by the Lady of Lórien and her maidens, using the light but warm silken stuff of the Galadhrim. Woven with the hues of leaf and branch, water and stone, it is hard to say what colour they are, making the wearer all but invisible to unfriendly eyes.

When you are in the wilderness, you can wrap yourself in your cloak and hood to hide. If you are not observed while hiding, make a TN 14 **Stealth** roll: on a success, you may remain hidden and unseen as long as you do not move or make a sound.

Bow of the Galadhrim (great bow)

The bows of the Galadhrim are larger than the Woodland bows of Mirkwood, but they are light and easy to wield. They are bent with a single string of elf-hair that will never break and can be left strung at all times without being damaged. The shafts from its quiver aim true and pierce deeply.

A Bow of the Galadhrim has an Encumbrance value of 1, thanks to its ease of use. Additionally, if you roll an extraordinary success on an attack using such a bow you automatically score a Piercing blow.

Elven-brooch

The Lady of Lórien sometimes honours the deeds of an adventurer by giving a mark of special friendship or gratitude: a beautiful silver and green brooch, shaped like the newly-opened leaves of a beech-tree. More than just an ornament, the brooch is said to keep its wearer away from evil fortune.

Once every session, you may change one result you got on your Feat die into a ᚠ. Additionally, your Standing rating does not decrease during a Year's End Fellowship phase if you do not return to Lórien.

- Men of Bree -

According to their own tales... they were the descendants of the first Men that ever wandered into the West of the middle-world. Few had survived the turmoils of the Elder Days; but when the Kings returned again over the Great Sea they had found the Bree-men still there, and they were still there now, when the memory of the old Kings had faded into the grass.

The small region of the Bree-Land is perhaps all that remains of the vanished kingdoms of Eriador, a little island of civilisation in the midst of a great deserted wilderness.

The area takes its name from its chief village, the town of Bree. The great mound of Bree-hill has sheltered its houses from the cold north wind since time immemorial, there where two ancient roads meet. The Greenway comes up through Dunland and Tharbad from the Gap of Rohan and goes as far as Deadman's Dike. The East road – *The* Road, really – is even older. It runs from the furthest east to the shores of the Sea.

Like the Shire, Bree is a safe haven for its denizens and travellers alike, despite the many threats that surround it. These days though, only Dwarves come up regularly along the East Road, and the Greenway sees even less traffic. But Bree endures.

The other three villages – the farming village of Staddle, Combe to the east and Archet in the Chetwood – see fewer visitors than Bree (and that's how they like it). Villagers come to Bree to bring goods to market, to trade with the wandering Dwarf-smiths and to drink in its famous inn, The Prancing Pony.

The Men of Bree tell stories of their ancestors, but if there is any truth left in those old tales, not even the Wise know, for the Men of Bree have been here for a long time even as Elves measure the passing years.

Description

The inhabitants of the Bree-land are mostly Men, but there are many families of Hobbits spread among the villages, especially in Staddle, and several of their customs and habits have been adopted by the Big Folk. In fact, the Men of Bree do not appear as outlandish as foreigners do to visitors from the Shire, and both the Big and the Little Folk live on very friendly terms. Their general appearance helps in this matter, too, as the Men of Bree are often brown-haired and rather short, tend to be stocky and broad, and are quick to laugh.

Standard of Living

The Bree-land is not as wealthy as the Shire, but the Bree-folk still maintain a lifestyle that could be interpreted to be at the low end of *Prosperous*. Part of their good fortune is due to the protection of their guardians, the Rangers of the North; those mysterious wanderers roam the land, silently patrolling the borders and roads, without anyone in Bree-land knowing for certain what they are up to.

Men of Bree Adventurers

Actual adventurers from the Bree-land are rare indeed. It is not unheard-of for a young Man of Bree to accompany some Dwarf-smiths west to the Blue Mountains, or east as far as the Forsaken Inn or even over the passes into Wilderland, but to go wandering without any thought of returning home... it is simply not the done thing, and anyone who does it is treated with suspicion and wariness. Maybe they are under some enchantment, or on the run from the law – why else would they leave Bree?

Suggested Callings: *Treasure-Hunter, Warden*. Even the most adventurous of Bree-landers tend to stay close to home, and Eriador provides plenty of challenges to those who go seeking for lost treasure. Others eventually realise that their land is but an island amid a sea of darkness, and choose to side with anyone willing to do something to preserve the peace most inhabitants of Bree take for granted.

Unusual Calling: *Slayer*. No major threats have plagued the Bree-land in recent years, and stories of tragic loss and revenge are only the matter of strange tales told by travellers at the inn.

What the Innkeeper Says...

- **Hobbits of the Shire:** "The Shire-folk are welcome enough in Bree, even if they call us outsiders; but then again, we call'em outsiders too! Not that many of 'em ever cross the Brandywine and come down to the cross-roads these days. Just the occasional Bucklander, and those are kin to our own Little Folk, you know".

- **Dwarves of the Blue Mountains:** "West they go, and east they go, then back west again. Always grim, never willing to talk about their business, but all that walking gives 'em a powerful thirst, and they're rarely short of coin, especially recently. There have been more going east of late, and they tell of a mountain of gold far away in Wilderland where the Dwarves are once again kings under the Mountain. I don't know about that, but it'd be a terrible blow to Bree if there were no more Dwarves passing through."

- **Rangers of the North:** "The wandering folk, yes, we call them Rangers. They sometimes visit Bree and stay for a day or two, then you might not see one for a month or a year or never again. They don't talk much, and bad news and bad times follow them. I wouldn't trust one of them, that's all I know."

- **Elves:** "I've never seen one, myself, but the stableboy swears he heard them singing out in the woods near Archet. He's half cracked, though. They were going west, he said, west to the Sea. I've never seen the Sea myself, neither, so what does it matter if a folk I'll never meet seek a place I'll never go? Nothing. Not a farthing."

- **Men of Bree:** "Oh, we've been around for quite a while, we Men of Bree. We've seen kings come and go, and we see Elves, and many Dwarves, go about their businesses along the road. Mark my words, when they all will be gone, we will be still here, at the crossroads."

- **Other Men:** "If they cause no trouble, and have coin to spend, and move along once their business is done, then I've nothing against them – but the folk down South are strange, and dangerous, and often as not bring trouble with them. Last few years, mind you, we've also had folk coming West over the mountains – big folk that

smelled like bears, and smaller men in green. What's all that about, that's what I want to know!"

Bree-Hobbits

The Little Folk of Bree are closely related to the Hobbits of the Shire – indeed, to most Big Folk, it is impossible to tell the difference unless one makes the mistake of asking one of the Hobbits, in which case get comfortable – you are in for a long talk about family trees, obscure legal issues, and exceedingly minute cultural differences. Players desiring to create a Bree-hobbit use all the rules concerning Hobbits of the Shire, with the following exceptions: they must replace the Cultural blessing of *Hobbit-sense* with that of the Men of Bree (*Bree-blood*, see below). Moreover, they must pick their Virtues from the following list: *Desperate Courage, Friendly and Inquisitive, The Big and the Little* (described below) and *Art of Disappearing, Small Folk* (described at pages 110 and 111 of *The One Ring Roleplaying Game*). Finally, any Cultural Reward must be selected from those available to Hobbits of the Shire.

Bree-Hobbits use distinctive family names which are generally unknown in The Shire: Banks, Brockhouse,Longholes, Mugwort, Sandheaver, Tunelly and Underhill.

Cultural Blessing

- Bree-blood -

"We're a bit suspicious round here of anything out of the way – uncanny, if you understand me; and we don't take to it all of a sudden."

The inclination of the Men of Bree to shy away from anything strange or unnatural has made them more vulnerable to adversaries able to instil fear in the heart of their enemies, as those monsters truly embody the darkest tales and legends of their folk, but has strengthened their resolve in the face of evil magic. When the Men of Bree are required to make a Fear test provoked by the special ability of an adversary, the difficulty of the roll is raised by one level (TN +2). Conversely, when they must make a Corruption test for any reason, the difficulty is reduced by two levels (TN -4).

Starting Skill Scores

Common Skills

Copy the following skill ranks onto the character sheet and underline the favoured skill.

Awe	0	Inspire	1	Persuade	2
Athletics	0	Travel	0	Stealth	2
Awareness	0	Insight	3	Search	0
Explore	0	Healing	1	Hunting	1
Song	1	Courtesy	3	Riddle	2
Craft	2	Battle	0	Lore	1

Weapon Skills

Choose one of the following two Weapon skill sets, and record it on the character sheet:

1) (Axes) 2, Bow 1, Dagger 1
2) Spear 2, Axe 1, Dagger 1

Specialities

Choose two traits from:

Appraising, Cooking, Herb-lore, Smoking, Trading, Woodwright

New Trait: Appraising

You have an eye for judging the quality of many things, from precious stones to exotic spices, or even the qualities of an individual.

Backgrounds

1 - Crossroads of the North

Your family has run a business in Bree since time immemorial, serving the needs of the Bree-landers and the strangers who come up from the south or east, or the Little Folk from the west. Why, your grandfather even once had Elves on his doorstep, as plain as day – and indeed, their coin was as good as anyone else's. You worked in the family business when you were younger, until a great desire came upon you to follow the Road and see where all those strangers and their gold come from.

Basic Attributes: Body 5, Heart 6, Wits 2
Favoured Skill: Courtesy
Distinctive Features:
(choose two Traits from those listed)
Cautious, Curious, Eager, Energetic, Fair-Spoken, Merry, Robust, Wary

2 - Off with Dwarves

Dwarf-miners and traders passing through Bree on their way to their mansions in the Blue Mountains took you with them as a caravan guard, and you became friends (if friendship is the right word for the grudging, slow-won respect of that grim folk). In time, you returned home to Bree, but wanderlust soon put your feet back on the road – only now you march in time to the walking songs of Durin's folk.

Basic Attributes: Body 4, Heart 7, Wits 2
Favoured Skill: Search
Distinctive Features:
(choose two Traits from those listed)
Cautious, Determined, Generous, Gruff, Hardy, Honourable, Patient, Steadfast.

3 - From the Chetwood

Your kin dwell in the Chetwood, the forest east of Bree. Most of the forest is safe and wholesome, but parts – especially near the Midgewater Marshes – have their own perils, and as a child you learned to find food that was safe to eat near certain old trees that whispered to one another in the night. It was worth creeping out of Archet-village and risking the dangers of the wood, though, because on some nights, you could hear Elvish singing on the wind when the Wandering Companies passed by.

Basic Attributes: Body 5, Heart 5, Wits 3
Favoured Skill: Hunting
Distinctive Features:
(choose two Traits from those listed)
Cautious, Clever, Curious, Determined, Patient, Reckless, Robust, Suspicious

4 - Gate-Warden

The gates of Bree and the other villages are locked at night, to keep out those that would make trouble... and other things, too. You were one of the wardens, and spent many cold, lonely nights on watch, with only the stars and hooting owls for company.

Basic Attributes: Body 4, Heart 5, Wits 4
Favoured Skill: Awareness
Distinctive Features:
(choose two Traits from those listed)
Cautious, Eager, Forthright, Just, Steadfast, Suspicious, True-hearted, Wary

5 - Came up the Greenway

Your grandfather was not born in the Bree-land. He made a long and arduous journey up from the South, across the Gap of Rohan from beyond the Isen. He crossed the river on the bridge at Tharbad with his wife and three children and settled here in the vale by Bree-hill. The North is cold and wild compared to the lands where your grandfather was born, but the tales he used to tell about the fierce kings of the South never made you doubt his choice.

Basic Attributes: Body 4, Heart 6, Wits 3
Favoured Skill: Travel
Distinctive Features
(choose two Traits from those listed)
Cautious, Energetic, Fair-spoken, Gruff, Hardy, Merry, True-hearted, Trusty

6 - No Longer Free from Care and Fear

It was many years ago that you discovered something that not many in the Bree-land even suspect: the region is far from being safe - it is a secluded shelter, a small island surrounded by unseen foes. You haven't told anyone as you fear they won't believe you. But you know for sure, because you have been about with a group of Outsiders... They are called Rangers in Bree, and not much is made of them, but they taught you to look for useful things in the wild. Now you know where to find shelter and supplies, a knowledge you will soon make use of, for the day when you will go out and look for them is near.

Basic Attributes: Body 3, Heart 7, Wits 3
Favoured Skill: Explore
Distinctive Features:
(choose two Traits from those listed)
Cautious, Clever, Forthright, Generous, Honourable, Just, Reckless, Trusty

Typical Names and Adventuring Age

The Men of Bree use names that to foreign ears sound similar to those used by Hobbits in the Shire (Hobbits beg to differ, of course).

Male Names: Alfred, Artie, Bill, Bob, Carl, Ed, Fred, Giles, Herb, Larry, Nob, Oswald, Percy, Perry, Sid, Tom, Harry.

Female Names: Daisy, Emma, Etta, Fay, Fern, Flora, Gert, Holly, Lily, Myrtle, Poppy, Rose, Sage, Tilly, Violet.

Family Names: Appledore, Asterfire, Bellsap, Briarcleave, Butterbur, Cherryborn, Chesterstout, Droverwind, Ferny, Foxglow, Goatleaf, Hardybough, Hedgedon, Hollybirch, Kettlegrass, Lilyhawk, Mossburn, Oakstout, Pickthorn, Pollenroad, Rushlight, Sedger, Shrubrose, Sweetroot, Thistlewool, Wayward.

Adventuring Age: 16-30

In the rare cases where Bree-folk go adventuring at all, they do it when the strength of youth is in their limbs, and usually return home to settle down before their fortieth year.

Cultural Virtues - Men of Bree

The Men of Bree live a sheltered life, it is true, but there is an upside in being fond of a warm hearth and the company of friends: you know there is something worth fighting for.

Desperate Courage

> **"Are you still willing to help me?' 'I am,' said Mr. Butterbur. 'More than ever."**

You lived all your life on the edge of the Wild, but the worst news that came to Bree in your time concerned only brigands or packs of hungry wolves. Now that you know something about the Shadow in the East, you are sure you will stand against it should the darkness extend this far west and threaten all that you love. If you are facing an adversary with an Attribute level equal to 6 or more, when you are fighting in a close combat stance you receive a bonus of +3 to your Parry score.

Friendly and Inquisitive

> **"Drink, fire, and chance-meeting are pleasant enough, but, well – this isn't the Shire."**

Since you started your adventures, you have realised that your folk's custom of trading with foreigners may help you in your endeavours. You have perfected your ability to inquire about the doings of strangers without letting curiosity get the better of you, providing you with many safe opportunities to learn from those you meet along the way. During an Encounter, if you invoke a pertinent Trait using a Personality or Custom skill, you automatically

raise by 1 your Advancement points total (do not mark a check, but raise your earned total directly).

Out of Memory and Old Tales

"Bree memories being retentive, Frodo was asked many times if he had written his book."

Luckily, very few Bree-folk have 'a memory like a lumber-room', where things wanted always end up buried. You have found that you rarely forget a face, the details of a story, the particulars of a map, or even the type of tracks that a band of Orcs you already faced leaves behind. You have learnt to exploit this insight to outguess your adversaries and those you meet, and to plan your journeys carefully. When you make a preliminary roll to determine your preparedness for either a journey, a combat or an encounter (see *The One Ring Roleplaying Game*, page 151), you may make an additional **Riddle** roll: you gain 1 additional Success die on a success, 2 on a great success and 3 on an extraordinary result.

The Big and the Little

There were probably many more Outsiders scattered about in the West of the World in those days than the people of the Shire imagined.

Men and Hobbits live side by side in Bree, in a peaceful arrangement that is found nowhere else in the world. That's why you know Hobbits and their ways very well indeed, and you go along with them quite nicely. You have discovered that this friendliness and familiarity, combined with your natural cheerfulness, can be a blessing when travelling with others. Raise your company's Fellowship rating by 1 additional point. Additionally, you may select a second Fellowship focus, as long as one of them is a Hobbit companion. (If you are a Bree-Hobbit, one of them must be a Man of Bree.)

Traveller's Blessing

"Good luck to your road, and good luck to your homecoming."

As adventurous as you have perhaps proven to be, your feet become more eager when you turn for home. When travelling to a Sanctuary you have already opened, you may add your Wisdom score to your **Travel** roll results. Additionally, if you are spending a Fellowship phase at home and you choose the *Heal Corruption* undertaking you are always allowed to choose a second Fellowship phase undertaking.

Cultural Rewards - Men of Bree

Bree has no Mathom-house, and there are no great store of weapons and armour in the nearby villages. But the Barrow-downs are just a stone's throw away, and the Greenway leads directly to Deadmen's Dike...

Gatekeeper's Lantern

A number of very ancient metal lanterns are kept in working order by the gatekeepers of Bree. Shaped like some curious shellfish, their craftsmanship is long lost, as is the cunning art that makes their light particularly bright and enduring. The nature of the liquid fuel they use is a secret that the gatekeepers guard jealously. If you wield a Gatekeeper's Lantern in combat while in the dark, all creatures with the *Fear of Fire* and *Hate Sunlight* special abilities lose 2 points of Hate at the end of the first round.

Pipe of the Prancing Pony

The sign of a worthy hero of Breeland, the black clay pipes of the Prancing Pony are deemed to be authentic relics by the Men of Bree, as their manufacture hearkens back to the time when the art of smoking the genuine pipe-weed first spread out of Bree. Recognisable by their long stem and large firebox, smoking a pipe of the Prancing pony is said to give great powers of contemplation. When making a roll using **Riddle** while smoking this pipe, roll the Feat die twice and keep the best result. Additionally, you maintain your Standing rating during a Year's End Fellowship phase by spending half the required Treasure points (see *The One Ring Roleplaying Game*, page 193).

Shield of the First Men (great shield)

These large, brightly-painted tall shields are handed down as heirlooms from one generation to the next, in a tradition that the elders of Breeland say stretches back to the first Men to cross the Mountains and settle in these lands east of the Sea. Old tales say that a man carrying such a shield in the thick of a fight should fear nothing. When you are fighting in a Forward stance carrying a Shield of the First Men, if you get a ᚠ on the Feat die on an attack roll, all attacks aimed at you the following Loremaster turn are considered to fail automatically.

- Men of the Lake -

"They had been wealthy and powerful, and there had been fleets of boats on the waters."

The denizens of Lake-town and the inhabitants of Dale are two separate folks sharing a common heritage. Esgaroth was first founded by merchants coming from Dale, but soon the city grew independent from that powerful city of Northmen, and ended up outliving it when Smaug destroyed Dale and scattered its population. For almost two centuries the survivors of Dale and the original Men of the Lake lived together under the threat of Dragon-fire, until their destinies were suddenly sundered by the flight of the Black Arrow.

Today, the city of Dale has been rebuilt and its crown restored to the head of the rightful heir of Girion; one of the first pronouncements of King Bard has been the recognition of the independence of Esgaroth and the rule of its council. The Men of the Lake busied themselves for many years with the great works needed to build their town anew, and the refounded Esgaroth emerges today from the surface of the Long Lake as a testimony to their strength of purpose.

The Men of the Lake are among the most enterprising and ambitious inhabitants of Wilderland. Even in their darkest years they never completely stopped looking beyond the borders of the Long Lake, and the most daring among them travelled far when everyone else cared only for their own defences. Today, Lake-town sits in the middle of a crossroads of opportunities, with a stronghold of Dwarves needing provisions and an ambitious young kingdom of Men to the north, and an ancient realm of Elves to the west.

Description

The Men of the Lake distinguish themselves from their neighbours, the inhabitants of Dale, by their greater love for 'modern' things and exotic novelties, a contrast with the Bardings' healthier respect for tradition. Where the wealthiest among the men and women of Dale display their status wearing gold bracelets and torques, or pins and brooches with precious stones, the inhabitants of Lake-town favour rich furs and fine-woven fabrics, often the product of foreign craftsmanship. Their differences extend beyond mere appearance though: Bardings are said to prize nobility and lineage, while Lake-men value above all men or women who elevate themselves through resourcefulness and daring.

Standard of Living

Since the death of the Dragon, trade has steadily become more profitable than ever. With every passing year more wealth goes up and down the Running River, as the demand for the goods that only Esgaroth is able to provide increases - with the Kingdom under the Mountain and Dale adding their requirements to those of the Elves of Woodland Realm, the Men of the Lake rank as belonging to a *Prosperous* culture.

Men of the Lake Adventurers

The everyday occupations that make up the busy life of a young merchant or fisherman of the Long Lake do not leave room to develop a thirst for adventuring or other flights of fancy. It needs a particularly venturesome soul to take heed of old songs, rather than be absorbed by "trades and tolls ... cargoes and gold". But when this happens, the proverbial determination of the Men of the Lake makes sure that the choice is carried out to the full.

Suggested Callings: *Treasure-hunter, Wanderer.* The inhabitants of the Long Lake work hard, and now reap the abundant fruits of their labour. But some among them dream of even greater riches - either the unparalleled treasures of ages long past, or the unknown beauty of lands they have yet to visit.

Unusual Calling: None.

What the Master of Esgaroth Says...

- **Bardings:** "Rejoice, men of Esgaroth, for a new lord sits on the throne of Dale! No more will we fear the sight of the Mountain, but will see gold once again descend the river to reach the green shores of the lake. Our lake, the rule of which has been recognised today by King Bard in front of our councillors and has been confirmed by the envoy of the Elvenking!"

- **Dwarves of the Lonely Mountain:** "Thorin Oakenshield and his company emerged from old songs to bring us back to a time of peace and riches. It is in the name of what they accomplished that our inns and taverns will always welcome adventurers hailing from any land."

- **Elves of Mirkwood:** "The Elvenking is wise beyond the reckoning of mortal Men. Has this council grown to be so proud to deem its own judgement superior to that of a monarch who sat on his throne long before our town was built? If there is anything our esteemed predecessors have taught us, it is to use our common sense..."

- **Hobbits of the Shire:** "The journey of Bilbo the Hobbit has demonstrated once again that no distance is too great if the reason to get on the road is good enough. And what better reason for a Man of the Lake than to find a new market and new goods to carry home? Bilbo Baggins has already sent letters to several traders inquiring about the possibility of buying toys or fireworks from Dale, and I heard stories of this leaf..."

- **Men of the Lake:** "What sets us apart from all the realms we know about is that we have chosen not to be ruled by a king or a lord, wishing to take the fate of our community in our own hands instead. A man of the lake doesn't seek fame or fortune for himself, but to gain an eminent position in the roll of the benefactors of our town."

- **Beornings and Woodmen:** "The denizens of the western eaves of Mirkwood are as we were a long time ago: they are simple and unlearned, unable to recognise the true worth of what they possess. It is our

duty as kinsmen to be as teachers to them, opening new trade routes to bring them goods and tools they have never dared imagine, in exchange for what they fail to fully appreciate. It is a pity that Beorn doesn't see the advantage his own folk might derive from dealing with us. They do not have a lot to offer but for the most uneducated of tastes, with the exception of their celebrated honeycakes, the secret of which Beorn doesn't seem interested in sharing."

Cultural Blessing

- Tenacious -

They began the planning of a new town, designed more fair and large even than before...

The Men of Esgaroth are quick to find and exploit the positive in everything they experience, however little it seems. Every defeat is a chance to learn, every blow suffered is a lesson taken by heart.

- When a Man of the Lake is wounded, or fails at a roll with seriously negative consequences, he may spend a point of Hope to earn an Experience point. Eligible rolls are, for example, all Fear tests made during combat, all Corruption tests, or any failed roll deemed suitable by the Loremaster.

Starting Skill Scores

Common Skills

Copy the following skill ranks onto the character sheet and underline the favoured skill:

Awe	0	Inspire	0	Persuade	2
Athletics	2	Travel	2	Stealth	0
Awareness	1	Insight	2	Search	0
Explore	0	Healing	2	Hunting	0
Song	2	Courtesy	2	Riddle	2
Craft	2	Battle	1	Lore	0

Weapon Skills

Choose one of the following two Weapon skill sets, and record it on the character sheet:

1) Great Bow 2, Sword 1, Dagger 1
2) Sword 2, Bow 1, Dagger 1

Specialities

Choose two traits from:

Boating, Fishing, Swimming, Minstrelsy, Trading, Woodwright

Backgrounds

1 - Legends Spring to Life

Your old nanny taught you many songs about the Dwarfkings of the Mountain, and you grew up thinking that their halls of stone were as real as the bone-littered cave of the Marsh-ogre she told you about when you misbehaved. Now you know that dreams and legends are real, and that there are treasures and wonderful new lands out there, waiting for you to go and seek them out.

Basic Attributes: Body 5, Heart 7, Wits 2
Favoured Skill: Song
Distinctive Features:
(choose two Traits from those listed)
Adventurous, Clever, Curious, Energetic, Fair-spoken, Merciful, Merry, Nimble

2 - Restless Pupil

Your father spent much of his hard-earned gold on your education, to make sure that one day his rightful heir could aspire to the loftiest positions in the city council. But you seemed able to focus only on myths and legends, your single-mindedness finally proving too much for your teachers and your father's patience. Soon you will have to make a choice: to renounce your dreams or take the road as an adventurer, to be soon forsaken by your family in favour of your younger siblings – unless you return as a hero.

Basic Attributes: Body 4, Heart 6, Wits 4
Favoured Skill: Lore
Distinctive Features:
(choose two Traits from those listed)
Adventurous, Clever, Grim, Robust, Secretive, Steadfast, Suspicious, Wilful

3 - Masterful Fingers

Everyone who knows you has, at least once, seen you sitting for long hours at your hearth or on the steps of the market-square quays with your knife in hand, whittling pieces of wood into animals, blossoms and leaves. Your ability has even drawn comments from passing raftelves, their praise music to your ears: you feel a measure of kinship with those graceful and silent forest- dwelling people, and you will one day go and visit their halls with many pillars, to see with your eyes the fabled carven throne of the Elvenking.

Basic Attributes: Body 6, Heart 6, Wits 2
Favoured Skill: Craft
Distinctive Features:
(choose two Traits from those listed)
Clever, Curious, Elusive, Fair, Just, Keen-eyed, Nimble, Tall

4 - Lordling

You were born into a family of envoys and diplomats, serving the city council of Esgaroth and its Master for countless generations. Your manners are so naturally dignified that you could have passed for the heir of a noble house - if you weren't born in a town where the only lords are merchant princes. But you don't see that as a flaw; where you are planning to go, the actions of an individual are not lessened in worth by lack of a proper lineage.

Basic Attributes: Body 4, Heart 7, Wits 3
Favoured Skill: Courtesy
Distinctive Features:
(choose two Traits from those listed)
Clever, Energetic, Forthright, Merciful, Merry, Steadfast, Tall, Trusty

5 - Watchman

You, your father and his father before him served in the city watch, until the town was incinerated by the fiery death throes of the Dragon. When you saw the great beast fall from the sky, you realised how countless years looking at the distant Mountain had been spent in vain - for of what use is a watchman when his warning is not heeded by heroes who can do something about the coming threat?

Basic Attributes: Body 5, Heart 6, Wits 3
Favoured Skill: Awareness
Distinctive Features:
(choose two Traits from those listed)
Clever, Forthright, Grim, Keen-eyed, Suspicious, Trusty, Vengeful, Wilful

6 - Innocence Lost

When you were a kid you could be seen running starry-eyed along the busy streets of the city, pulling pranks with your friends on noble emissaries, rich merchants, shady traders, even silent sell-swords and menacing cutthroats.

Your stare lost its innocence when one night your older brother disappeared after a night of drunken revelry. You don't know what happened to him – he may have fallen into the water, but you know well that in Lake-town even drunk men know not to walk close to the edge of the quays...

Basic Attributes: Body 5, Heart 5, Wits 4
Favoured Skill: Awe
Distinctive Features:
(choose two Traits from those listed)
Clever, Elusive, Fair, Fair-spoken, Just, Robust, Secretive, Vengeful

Typical Names and Adventuring Age

The Northmen of Dale and Esgaroth speak the same language and share a common vocabulary of personal names, (See *The One Ring Roleplaying Game*, page 41 for more on Men of the Lake naming conventions and Adventuring age.)

Cultural Virtues - Men of the Lake

The Men of the Lake are renowned throughout northern Wilderland as outstanding archers and boatmen, daring merchants and traders. The same firm determination that has let them safeguard their trades along the river during the dark years of the dominion of the Dragon might also see them succeed as adventurers and heroes.

Bowman of the Guild

A hail of dark arrows leaped up...

You have demonstrated a talent worthy of admission to the Bowmen's Guild of Esgaroth, a honourable association uniting the best archers of Lake-town. Now you may train and share secrets of the trade with many old friends of Bard the Bowman himself, all veterans of the Battle of Five Armies.

Raise your Standing by 1 point. Additionally, from now on, when you are using a bow or a great bow, you may spend a point of Hope to upgrade the quality of a successful attack roll by one level, turning a success into a great success, or a great success into an extraordinary one.

Merchant Prince

Lake-town was refounded and was more prosperous than ever, and much wealth went up and down the Running River...

Your family's fortune is rising with the reopening of the trading routes that lead to the markets in the South and East. This increased affluence has started to positively affect your adventuring life, as you may choose a servant from those employed in your household and have him join you in your next endeavour. At the start of an Adventuring phase you may pick one servant to accompany you:

Page: A page assists you in all your daily routines, like washing and dressing, and takes care of your clothes and gear. He is at your side during any encounter, making sure that you are properly introduced and providing advice and counsel. When you enjoy the help of a page, you can roll the Feat die twice and keep the best result when you are making any **Courtesy** and **Insight** rolls.

Physician: A physician is an older servant who has long been trained in the arts of taking care of your health. He knows every little ailment you might have suffered from since you were a child, and possesses the knowledge to prepare a remedy. As long as you are assisted by a physician, you can roll the Feat die twice and keep the best result when you are making a **Healing** roll.

Porter: A porter helps you in carrying your gear when you are adventuring. When you are making a Fatigue test, you can roll the Feat die twice and keep the best result.

Scrivener: A scrivener is a personal servant who can read and write. He is usually well-learned and keeps a daily record of your exploits. If you are employing a scrivener you can roll the Feat die twice and keep the best result when you are making any **Lore** and **Riddle** rolls.

With the exception of a physician, a servant in a rich trading family is usually a young boy, often a minor relative of modest ambition. Regardless of his duty, your servant is no fighting man, but is considered to be always around and eager to perform his assigned task.

Shield-Fighting

There had been fleets of boats on the waters, and some were filled with gold and some with warriors in armour...

You have learnt to wield a shield like the boatmen of Esgaroth do when they fight to repel enemies trying to board their ships. If you are fighting using a shield of any type, when you successfully hit an enemy roll the Feat die again: on a roll of 8+ you inflict an additional loss of Endurance equal to your Damage rating plus the Encumbrance value of the shield you are using (1 for a Buckler, 3 for a Shield, 5 for a Great Shield).

Trader's Savvy

They still throve on the trade that came up the great river from the South...

Some say that "fair speech may hide a foul heart", but you have lived among merchants and traders long enough to know that pleasant words are always received better than harsh ones when dealing with strangers. When you are about to play out an encounter, you can attempt to raise its Tolerance rating making a roll with any custom skill (**Song**, **Courtesy** or **Riddle**) against TN 14. On a successful roll, add +1 to the Tolerance of the encounter, +2 if the roll was a great success, or +3 if the roll was an extraordinary success.

Water Legs

As soon as the raft of barrels came in sight boats rowed out from the piles of the town...

Life on the lake has taught you how to move appropriately when on board a moving boat. Now that you have taken up adventuring you can exploit your superior balance to your advantage even when you are on dry land.

When an opponent is attacking you in combat, before the dice are rolled, you may spend a bonus Success die due to a preliminary roll to get a bonus of +3 to your Parry score. Additionally, if you are fighting on a boat, a raft, or other precarious or risky surface (for example, an Elven tree platform, a rope bridge) you receive one free bonus Success die during Onset.

Cultural Rewards - Men of the Lake

Collecting valuable objects has always been a favoured occupation among the richest Merchant lords of Lake-town. Among many a cloth of gold wall hanging embroidered in the East or a set of ivory masks from the South sometimes hide precious items of unusual craftsmanship.

Brazen Armour (mail armour)

Men-folk out of the East favour suits of armour made of overlapping brass plates, or composed of small scales arranged in a mesh, like the scales on a fish or the feathers of birds. Many of these elaborate coats have been hanging on the walls of the great hall of Lake-town, waiting for heroes worthy to wear them. A Brazen armour is the equivalent of a suit of mail armour, but wearing it allows you to roll one additional Success die on a Protection roll against an attack made with a edged or blunt melee weapon (swords, axes and clubs), and one Success die less against spears and arrows, or other types of penetrating attacks.

Keening Bog-stone

Among the most unusual and rare possessions of a lakeman household are these unassuming whetstones, small flat pebbles never bigger than a pigeon egg, black in colour and faintly traced with green veins. They can be obtained from the oldest and most superstitious fishermen of the town, who swear they get them in exchange for iron tool offerings left in certain areas of the Long Marshes. If you carry a Keening Bog-stone in a pouch or wear it as a necklace, it vibrates and emits a soft wailing sound when a creature possessing the *Hate Sunlight* or *Denizen of the Dark* special abilities is close (within 100 yards). Additionally, the first attack you aim at such a creature will provoke an additional loss of a point of Hate.

Serpent Scimitar (sword)

Exotic blades from the distant South are the most sought after collector's items among the more fashionable merchants of Lake-town. Most of those that find their way to the North are useless ceremonial blades of cheaply damasked iron, with lacquered hilts and scabbards set with coloured stones. A rare few are the work of truly superior craftsmanship, quick and deadly weapons in the hand of a skilled fighter. When making a melee attack using a Serpent scimitar, ignore any Parry rating bonus your target has that is due to them carrying a shield.

- Men of Minas Tirith -

O Gondor, Gondor! Shall Men behold the Silver Tree,
Or West Wind blow again between the Mountains and the Sea?"

The city known today as Minas Tirith has stood for thousands of years as a beacon of hope for the Free Peoples of Middle-earth. But in the twilight of the Third Age the gleam of the White Tower is only caught in the brightest light of a summer's day. The Tower of the Setting Sun has become the Tower of Guard, the last bulwark against Mordor. The White Tree that blossomed in the court of the citadel is long withered. Stewards rule the City, for a king has not sat on the throne for many generations of Men. These are the waning years of Gondor, and the kingdom stands upon the edge of a knife, suspended between hope and despair.

Yet, still the Lords of Minas Tirith defy their enemies, guarding the passages of the Great River from the Argonath to the Sea. And their struggle is bitter. The guards of the Citadel have only to look East to face Minas Morgul, the dreaded Tower of Sorcery, rising in a cleft in the Mountains of Shadow, and along the road leading to it, the ruins of their abandoned capital city, Osgiliath. The Men of Minas Tirith know that to falter in their vigilance is to invite disaster to all they hold dear.

But this unceasing watchfulness has a price. Once, the Dúnedain of the South were deemed to be wiser than other Men, excelling in skill and knowledge. Today, the Men of Minas Tirith value prowess and the craft of weapons above all else, forgetting that in the treasuries of the City much ancient lore is preserved by long tradition. But such is the need of their days, for the Shadow in the East is stirring, and the power of the Black Land is sleeping no more.

Description

The Men of Minas Tirith are descendants of the Men of the West, the sea-kings who built the City in the time of the two kingdoms of Arnor and Gondor. The wisdom and beauty that Elendil brought out of the West endured here long, but the line of the kings finally died out, leaving the Stewards who followed them to recruit the strength of their people among other folks. Today, the inhabitants of Minas Tirith are Men of the Twilight, tall and fair warriors with memories of ancient things.

The people of Minas Tirith dress in a manner that can be considered rich by outsiders. They favour fur-lined cloaks, fine-woven garments in a diverse array of fabrics, and accessories simple in design but precious in materials, like collars and rings of silver or gold, set with precious stones.

Standard of Living

Gondor remains rich with the wealth of trade, and although the Steward directs much of its resources towards preparing for war, its people live comfortably. Because of this the Men of Minas Tirith are considered a *Prosperous* culture.

Men of Minas Tirith Adventurers

The Men of Minas Tirith esteem war and valour above all else, as their pursuit marks a man as one who values the protection of his kin and folk. Bold and adventurous, the inhabitants of the Tower of Guard can at times be encountered on distant lands, seeking out allies or lost wisdom that might aid them in the defence of Minas Tirith.

Suggested Callings: *Leader, Warden.* Victory against the Enemy can be achieved in different ways: a captain of war leads his men with wise choices and cunning strategies, while champions are hardy in toil and charge headlong into battle..

Unusual Calling: *Scholar.* Few Men of Minas Tirith turn their gaze to the past, when Gondor was the centre of the known world and knowledge was hoarded as gold and precious stones, and fewer still can unlock the secrets the lore-masters of old stored in books and tablets.

What Ecthelion, Steward of Gondor, says...

- **Bardings:** "Tidings of a great victory over Orcs and their kin in the North has reached our halls, but I fear that news of the death of a Dragon might be too fanciful to be true. If someone is so valorous to accomplish such a feat, let us hope they will find their way to the South."

- **Beornings and Woodmen:** "The lands that lie north of Rohan is now to us so far away that we people it with all sorts of prodigies and monsters. But Mithrandir says there are things such as magicians and skin-changers. I do not know whether to believe such tales, even when spoken by one so wise as the Grey Wanderer."

- **Dunlendings**: "They are the enemies of our staunchest allies. Too much they resemble those Men that our ancestors encountered when they came to the shores of Middle-earth. Surly and wild, quick to anger and jealous."

- **Elves:** "Where is the glory and grace of the Elves in these dark days? Seldom has one of the fair folk been seen in Minas Tirith for years beyond count. Do they all hide in their woodland realms and underground domains? Did they all flee Middle-earth to sail West?."

- **Men of Minas Tirith:** "The walls and gates of our Tower of Guard are stout, but those defences are useless if the hearts of those who man them are not strong. For the storm that is gathering to the East threatens to tear down the sturdiest of our walls."

- **Riders of Rohan:** "Our allies of old, the Riders have ridden to our aid ever since Steward Cirion gifted the land of Calenardhon to Eorl the Young. King Thengel dwelt in Gondor for many a long year, and his people are always welcome in my halls – never more so than in these dark days."

Cultural Blessing

- Men of Valour and Wisdom -

"Believe not that in the land of Gondor the blood of Númenor is spent, nor all its pride and dignity forgotten."

Once accounted among the High Men, the Dúnedain of the South have diminished. Yet, the great deeds committed by the best among them tell that the nobility of the kings of old isn't fully spent yet.

- To gain a new rank in Wisdom or Valour, you pay an additional Experience cost equal to the rank you are acquiring. Then, if your Wisdom rating is equal to or superior to your Valour, when you roll an using any common skill you can roll the Feat die again, keeping the new result. Conversely, if your Valour rating is superior to your Wisdom, apply this ability to your attack rolls.

Starting Skill Scores

Common Skills

Copy the following skill ranks onto the character sheet and underline the favoured skill:

Awe	2	Inspire	3	Persuade	1
Athletics	1	Travel	1	Stealth	0
Awareness	1	Insight	2	Search	0
Explore	1	Healing	1	Hunting	0
Song	1	Courtesy	2	Riddle	1
Craft	0	Battle	2	Lore	2

Weapon Skills

Choose one of the following two Weapon skill sets, and record it on the character sheet:

1) (Spears) 2, Sword 1, Dagger 1
2) Long sword 2, Bow 1, Dagger 1

Specialities

Choose two Traits from:

Boating, Lore of Gondor, Herb-lore, Story-telling, Swimming, Trading

New Trait: Lore of Gondor

Much of the old lore of the kingdom of Gondor is preserved in your city, and some of its wisdom is passed on to its inhabitants. Lore of Gondor bestows the benefits granted by both *Old Lore* and *Region-lore (Gondor)*.

Backgrounds

1 - Horseman in a Stony City

You grew in the streets of the sixth circle of Minas Tirith, where the barracks housing the errand-riders of the Steward are found. You woke up every morning to the sound of hooves clattering and horses neighing. Growing up, you have seen the same streets over and over again from the tall back of a swift steed, ready to go at the urgent command of the Steward or his captains.

Basic Attributes: Body 5, Heart 5, Wits 5
Favoured Skill: Athletics
Distinctive Features:
(choose two Traits from those listed)
Adventurous, Eager, Hardy, Keen-eyed, Reckless, Stern, True-hearted, Wilful

2 - Keeper of the Seven Gates

Your father was one of the keepers of the keys of the City, and knew the pass-words of its Seven Gates. One day you will take his place, a position held by your family for generations. Yours will be a dangerous watch, for they say that in these darkening days agents of the Shadow work within the walls of Minas Tirith as often as without.

Basic Attributes: Body 6, Heart 5, Wits 4
Favoured Skill: Insight
Distinctive Features:
(choose two Traits from those listed)
Determined, Energetic, Just, Proud, Steadfast, Stern, Suspicious, Tall

3 - Master of Healing

They say that the lore of Gondor has fallen from its fullness of old. Yet, there are places in Minas Tirith where knowledge and wisdom is still honoured, and nowhere more than in the Houses of Healing, where the hurt and sick are tended.

You have been the pupil of a Herb-master, a lady wise in leechcraft and in the ways of mending the hurt provoked by war and disease, and you are sure that her teachings will prove precious in your adventures to come.

Basic Attributes: Body 7, Heart 5, Wits 3
Favoured Skill: Healing

Distinctive Features:
(choose two Traits from those listed)
Determined, Eager, Energetic, Just, Merciful, Stern, Suspicious, True-hearted

4 - Stonewright

The great age of your stone city is betrayed by the ever-present sounds of industrious labour: the beating of hammers, the clinking of trowels, and the creaking of cart and barrow-wheels. Everywhere you look a wall is being mended, a statue is repaired, and the fair letters of an ancient inscription are being restored. The Tower of Guard needs looking after, as much as it needs defending, lest it falls year by year into decay.

To this goal, an army of craftsmen apply their skills every day, repairing what is damaged, and substituting what is ruined beyond repair. You have been one of them, and you look at your stoneworking days with pride. And woe to the man who says that your time would have been spent better as a soldier!

Basic Attributes: Body 6, Heart 6, Wits 3
Favoured Skill: Craft
Distinctive Features:
(choose two Traits from those listed)
Bold, Fierce, Hardened, Lordly, Proud, Stern, Tall, Wrathful

5 - Seaman

The Men of the South regard the Sea as a blessed thing and often look West in remembrance of lost Westernesse. While you too have felt the call of the open waters of the Bay of Belfalas and beyond, you always had a more pragmatic matter to attend to: Whether by ship or by river-boat, you and your family have carried goods to and from the far reaches of Gondor, keeping trade and commerce alive in this time of twilight.

Basic Attributes: Body 7, Heart 4, Wits 4
Favoured Skill: Persuade
Distinctive Features
(choose two Traits from those listed)
Adventurous, Fair, Hardened, Hardy, Keen-eyed, Merciful, Steadfast, Stern

6 - Soldier of Gondor

You were but a child when you first learnt how to properly sharpen the blade of your family sword. Since that day, you have taken more meals in your company's storehouses and butteries than in your home, and have walked for miles to the words of ancient marching songs. But no toil or hardship is too grievous for you, for when you climb up the steps leading to the highest battlements of the City to look out on the lands below, you see how much would be at stake, should a war against the Nameless One finally come.

Basic Attributes: Body 7, Heart 6, Wits 2
Favoured Skill: Inspire
Distinctive Features:
(choose two Traits from those listed)
Bold, Fair, Fierce, Lordly, Reckless, Stern, Wilful, Wrathful

Typical Names and Adventuring Age

The Men of Minas Tirith traditionally name their sons and daughters using the Sindarin tongue.

Male Names: Adrahil, Amlaith, Arvegil, Baranor, Belecthor, Bergil, Celepharn, Cirion, Damrod, Dírhael, Duinhir, Egalmoth, Eradan, Findemir, Forlong, Golasdan, Hallas, Hirluin, Ingold, Iorlas, Malvegil, Ohtar, Orodreth, Tarannon, Targon.

Female Names: Anwen, Arbereth, Berúthiel, Baraniel, Calanril, Celenneth, Elnîth, Eraniel, Finduilas, Gilraen, Gilraeth, Gloredhel, Idril, Ioreth, Ivorwen, Lôrwend, Lothíriel, Luindîs, Meneloth, Moriel, Morwen, Narieth, Narniel, Orothêl, Tarandîs.

Adventuring Age: 16-50

The Men of Minas Tirith do not usually become adventurers before their 16th year of age, and rarely continue beyond their forties, when they return to their cities to serve their family and Steward.

Cultural Virtues - Men of Minas Tirith

The Dúnedain of Minas Tirith live their lives inside a fortress, the burden of watching over Mordor weighing heavily upon their backs. But they are more than just soldiers, as their lineage is noble and their wisdom deep.

Captain of Gondor

'By our valour are the wild folk of the East still restrained, and the terror of Morgul kept at bay ...'

The walls of your City have endured many wars. In the face of such threats, your folk esteems a warrior's qualities above those of men of other crafts, and captains are tributed the highest of honours. For it is upon their choices that the hopes of the City rest. You have been trained to lead other men into combat in an orderly way, so that the strength of a company is superior to that of the warriors that are part of it.

At the start of combat, if you are the Captain of the company (see page 105) you may spend a point of Hope to gain a number of additional Combat advantage dice equal to the number of heroes in your company.

Guard of the Tower

'Yet, Master Peregrin, to be only a man of arms of the Guard of the Tower of Gondor is held worthy in the City, and such men have honour in the Land.'

You have been sworn into the service of the Lord and Steward as a Guard of the Citadel, a position held in high regard in the City, and in the whole land of Gondor. When you are in Minas Tirith, you are expected to wear the black and silver livery of the Tower, and to follow the commands of your superiors.

You gain a bonus of +1 to Standing. Then, you learn one of the listed abilities for free when you first select this Virtue. You may later acquire another ability during a Year's End Fellowship phase in Minas Tirith: choose this activity as your undertaking for the phase and spend 1 Experience point. (You may acquire all three abilities in any order).

Many Foes: When you are fighting in an Open stance and you are engaged by more than one adversary in combat, you ignore the effects of being Weary.

Shield-arm: When you are fighting in a Defensive stance, you double your shield's Parry modifier.

Sword-arm: When you are fighting in a Forward stance, add a bonus equal to twice the Encumbrance rating of your weapon to the total Endurance loss inflicted by each of your blows.

Onward into Battle

"Gondor!" cried Boromir and leaped after him.

Many among the most celebrated heroes of Minas Tirith distinguished themselves on the field of battle, and in a world of valiant warriors, the greatest among them are

deemed to be those who were able to inspire other men to withstand fear and hurt when in the thick of a fight. When you fight in an Open stance you may attempt the *Rally Comrades* combat task in addition to your attack roll (instead of forfeiting your action for the turn). If you fail your rally skill roll (**Inspire** or **Song**), or if you roll an eye you lose 1 point of Hope and you cannot invoke this virtue again for the rest of the battle.

Over Dangerous Leagues

'...a hundred and ten days I have journeyed all alone.'

The martial upbringing and prowess of the Men of Minas Tirith makes them tireless travellers. From the northern bounds of the realm to its southern reaches, emissaries have trod the roads once laid by the Men of the West since the founding of the City.

Raise your maximum Endurance score by 3 points. Additionally, when you are on a Journey, if you obtain a great success on a Fatigue test, you may spend a point of Hope to automatically succeed on a following Fatigue test required for the same journey (or the following two on an extraordinary result).

Piercing Sight

...a keen wit lay behind his searching glance.

It is said that few can hold fast against the searching eyes of a Man of Gondor and that under such a gaze, secrets hidden in the hearts of lesser men are often revealed. During encounters, add one Success die to all your **Awe**, **Insight** and **Riddle** rolls (up to a maximum of six dice). Additionally, the first time any one of such rolls is successful, you gain 1 Advancement point (check the appropriate skill group).

Cultural Rewards – Men of Minas Tirith

A great store of helms, shields and hauberks is kept in working order in the armouries of the Citadel, lest the city be caught undefended by the Enemy. Many of those ancient blades and instruments of war would be considered priceless in places of less royalty.

Horn of Minas Anor

When Minas Tirith was still called Minas Anor, the Tower of the Sun, it was a fair City, high and full of light, deemed to be as beautiful as a queen. Horns and trumpets were sounded to signal joyous occasions, like marriages and feasts, not only to announce new forays into enemy territory. Horns that were crafted in those merrier days still hold that bright quality in their sound, and there is nothing more hateful to the ears of the Enemy.

In combat, when it is your turn to take action, you may forego your chance to make an attack roll and make a roll of **Awe** instead. The TN for the roll is 10, plus the highest Attribute level among all foes. On a successful roll, all adversaries have been dismayed and are considered to have no favoured skills for a duration based on the success produced by the roll: for 1 round on an ordinary success, 2 rounds on a great success, and 3 rounds on an extraordinary result.

Shield of the Citadel (shield, great shield)

The armourers of the Tower of Guard know how to make excellent shields, many-layered and overlaid with plates of metal. Emblazoned with the device of the Citadel, they are sturdy, but light and wieldy, to better deflect the blows of the enemy.

When you are carrying a Shield of the Citadel, if you are hit by an adversary rolling an ordinary success, reduce the Endurance loss inflicted on you by a number of points equal to the Encumbrance value of your shield.

Weapon of Great Lineage (spears, swords)

Superior blades and spearheads forged by the Men of the West can at times be found buried under the earth, where the armies of the Dúnedain met the hordes of the Nameless Enemy. Wrought using a silvery metal, many are preserved like relics in the stone halls of Minas Tirith, to be given to those who prove worthy of their glorious past. The best weapons are light and strong, and so well-balanced that a skilled warrior can easily answer to the blows of the enemy with quick counter-attacks.

When you are wielding a Weapon of Great Lineage and you are hit by an attack, if the attacker is an Orc or Evil Man, you in turn deal a loss of Endurance equal to 3 or your Valour rating (whichever is higher) to your attacker.

- Riders of Rohan -

"Where now is the horse and the rider? Where is the horn that was blowing?
Where is the helm and the hauberk, and the bright hair flowing?"

The great plains to the north of the realm of Gondor were once known as Calenardhon before the Steward Cirion granted them to Eorl the Young as a reward for his aid and valour. Its borders stretch from the Fords of Isen in the west to the Mouths of the Entwash in the east. Rolling hills and golden grain fields are broken to the south only by the White Mountains where the fortress of Helm's Deep lies, and to the north by the ancient Entwood where even the Riders of the Mark do not go.

Though vast, this realm had been ravaged by plague, invasion and internal strife. In time, the Horse-lords have driven back marauding Orcs, fierce tribes of Easterlings and Dunlendings, and have endured cruel winters and fierce famine. From the lowliest farmer to the Lord of the Mark, the Rohirrim have learnt to show no fear and expect no aid from outsiders — life in the Riddermark has made them a hardy folk, warlike and proud.

Now nearly five hundred years have passed since the days of Eorl, and his House still rules over Rohan from the Golden Hall of Meduseld in Edoras. There sits Thengel King, and the Horse-lords are enjoying days of peace, the helms of their knights can be seen gleaming in the rising sun as they roam the land, on the arched backs of their magnificent steeds.

Description

The men and women of the Riddermark are warlike, fair and tall, most often with golden hair and light eyes. Darker hair and eyes are not unknown, though uncommon, and such features are at times looked down upon, as they are deemed the sign of Dunlending ancestry. Both men and women grow their hair long and often tie it in long braids, especially when riding.

While devoted to warfare in all its forms, the Riders of Rohan embrace life to its fullest, celebrating all its positive aspects in song and deed, and mourning their passing in sadness when forgetfulness and old age approach.

Standard of Living

The Rohirrim are a simple folk, content with tending their beasts and fields, and with breeding their horses. They welcome strangers who come to their land in peace, but above all they desire to be free and live without serving any foreign lord. As a consequence, they are ready to rise up in arms when they are threatened, and can be considered to belong to a *Martial* culture.

Rohan Adventurers

The Riders of Rohan rarely concern themselves with affairs beyond the Mark. Those few who cross the western banks of the Isen or travel north to Wilderland normally do so to obey their lord's command who has sent them on some errand. Those Riders of Rohan who journey beyond the borders of the Mark without the King's leave risk losing his favour and being accused of treason.

Suggested Callings: *Slayer, Wanderer*. The Riders of Rohan are a warlike folk, with as many feuds in their history as there are alliances. Even the lowliest farmer keeps a sharpened dagger at his side and a grudge in his heart. And they have not forgotten their wandering times, when they rode across Wilderland as free as the waters of the Great River, and they often feel a longing that may set them upon the back of their favourite steed to ride for days on end.

Unusual Calling: *Treasure-hunter*. The Rohirrim dread the dark places that open under ancient burial barrows and lie at the mountains' roots, for they believe they may be haunted. For this reason, they do not desire to go and find gold that has been hidden, and prefer to leave such places undisturbed, together with any hoards they might contain.

What Thengel King Says...

- **Beornings:** "Some among our old and wise still tell our children tales of the great bears that lived in the Mountains before the giants came, but no one can really believe such legends to be true... It is said that these Beornings are of our blood and that they are fierce and fair, but I cannot trust these fancy tales speaking of them following a skin-changer!"

- **Dwarves:** "Long has it been since any Dwarf came to Edoras to trade with us. What reason could they have now to bring wealth to our realm? They have no love for our horses and instead crave only jewels and riches."

- **Hobbits of the Shire:** "The holbytla? Periannath they are called in the southern realm of Gondor, and they are no more real there than here. Let us leave these foolish stories and fairy tales to the children."

- **Men of Minas Tirith:** "I spent my best years in the service of Steward Turgon, and I tell you that the noble spirit of Gondor is not yet extinguished. There is a greatness in the Men of Minas Tirith that we should strive to match. For ours is a strong lineage, but we have much to learn."

- **Riders of Rohan:** "By looking at the current state of our land, one might say that the glory of Rohan is past. And now your King is a stranger, you say. But rest assured. Before I will leave you to go and meet my ancestors, I will achieve enough to cancel what shame my father Fengel heaped upon the name of the Eorlingas."

- **Woodmen of Wilderland:** "We left the vales of the Great River centuries ago, to escape the darkness that was coming out of the forest. I know not how these men hold their strength in that terrible place. Without swift steeds or sharp spears, they keep the shadow at bay – and that is to be admired."

Cultural Blessing

- Fey Mood -

"Death! Ride, ride to ruin and the world's ending!"

The Men of the Mark are a generous folk, but when war is upon them, then they are as fell to their enemies as they are loyal to their friends. When the lust of battle is on them, they appear as men stricken with grief, their faces deathly white, or as madmen ready to laugh at despair. The Riders of Rohan may enter a battle-fury if they roll an or on any attack or Protection roll. When this happens, they may choose to gain a point of Shadow, to add one Success die (up to a maximum of 6) to all their close combat attack rolls until the end of the battle.

Starting Skill Scores

Common Skills

Copy the following skill ranks onto the character sheet and underline the favoured skill:

Awe	2	Inspire	2	Persuade	0
Athletics	3	Travel	2	Stealth	0
Awareness	1	Insight	2	Search	0
Explore	1	Healing	0	Hunting	1
Song	2	Courtesy	1	Riddle	0
Craft	1	Battle	2	Lore	0

Weapon Skills

Choose one of the following two Weapon skill sets, and record it on the character sheet:

1) (Spears) 2, Sword 1, Dagger 1
2) Sword 2, Bow 1, Dagger 1

A Faithful Mount

A newly created Rider of Rohan starts the game with a radhors, a Travel horse, also known as a palfrey. It's a fine beast, fit both for riding on a journey and in combat. A hero wishing to enlarge their stable should refer to the rules for *Acquiring Horses*, in *Horse-lords of Rohan*, page 132.

Specialities

Choose two Traits from:

Beast-lore, Minstrelsy, Riddermark-lore, Horsemanship, Story-telling, Woodwright

New Trait: Horsemanship

From an early age you have learnt to be comfortable around horses and how to best care for them. You can readily tell a good horse from a poor or mediocre one, and when you are on horseback you feel more at ease than upon your feet.

Shieldmaiden of the North

A handful of young women from the noblest households in Rohan choose to become shieldmaidens, to win renown among the great Riders and to find joy only in the songs of slaying. A player wishing to create a shieldmaiden of Rohan character may adopt the standard Cultural Blessing of the Riders of Rohan, or replace it with the variant blessing *Faithful beyond Fear*.

– Faithful beyond Fear –

"You stand between me and my lord and kin. Begone, if you be not deathless!"

Shieldmaidens are trained to ride and wield a blade at an early age and not to fear either pain or death. When faced with threats capable of overwhelming even the most stout-hearted warriors, a shieldmaiden does not blench, but steels her resolve and draws her weapon. When a shieldmaiden faces a creature forcing her to make a Fear test, her Attribute bonus is based on her favoured Heart rating. If she passes the test, she will add one Success die (up to a maximum of 6) to all her attack rolls aimed at that creature until the end of the fight.

Backgrounds

1 - Outrider

You have never found greater peace than during those times when the wind was whipping about you and your beloved steed was riding hard across the fields of the Riddermark. As a result, you have become an exceptional rider even amongst your peers. You can travel at a swift pace over long distances and without rest and you are often tasked with scouting ahead of a force of Riders and with carrying messages between distant settlements.

Basic Attributes: Body 6, Heart, 4, Wits 4
Favoured Skill: Travel
Distinctive Features:
(choose two Traits from those listed)
Adventurous, Proud, Keen-eyed, Reckless, Robust, Steadfast, Stern, Swift

2 -The Greatest Hunter

You have always been fascinated by the story of King Folca, the slayer of the Great Boar of Everholt. He was killed by the beast, but his glory is still remembered today. You dream of surpassing his deed, and becoming known as the greatest hunter of the Riddermark. Whether you will achieve your ambition by chasing wild beasts or Orcs, you do not know nor care.

Basic Attributes: Body 6, Heart 5, Wits 3
Favoured Skill: Hunting
Distinctive Features:
(choose two Traits from those listed)
Curious, Fair, Forthright, Reckless, Secretive, True-Hearted, Wary, Wilful

3 - Wandering Outcast

Whether by brutal truth or twisted falsehood, your father was branded a liar and an oath-breaker, and you and your family were cast from your village for his crimes. The Golden Hall is a place you have only ever seen from afar and you have never heard the minstrels sing the songs of your ancestors. You drifted between the hills and fields of grain, shying away from the gaze of farmers and wanderers, and have learnt not to leave traces or signs of your passage.

Basic Attributes: Body 7, Heart 5, Wits 2
Favoured Skill: Stealth
Distinctive Features:
(choose two Traits from those listed)
Fierce, Grim, Proud, Reckless, Secretive, Vengeful, Wary, Wrathful

4 - Minstrel of the Golden Hall

The history of Rohan is not written in any book or tome. Instead it is secreted in the verses of those songs you were taught by your mother and father. You have sung for the living and the dead, and your voice has filled even the Golden Hall of Meduseld. But new deeds worthy of song occur each day as a darkness gathers and you would be there to witness them first-hand and weave them into legend.

Basic Attributes: Body 5, Heart 5, Wits 4
Favoured Skill: Song
Distinctive Features:
(choose two Traits from those listed)
Adventurous, Bold, Fair, Forthright, Reckless, Robust, Stern, True-Hearted

5 - Fey and Dangerous

It is said that a battle-fury comes upon the warriors of the Mark that makes them fierce and fell beyond the valour of other men. You yearn to feel that fey mood overtake you, and gain renown slaying those who threaten your beloved homeland. You do not fear death, for you know that for all heroes of the Mark the end will come only when songs no longer fill the halls of Edoras.

Basic Attributes: Body, 7, Heart 4, Wits 3
Favoured Skill: Battle
Distinctive Features:
(choose two Traits from those listed)
Bold, Fierce, Generous, Reckless, Tall, Swift, Vengeful, Wrathful

6 - Grandson of the Doorward

Your grandfather's duty was to guard over the gates of Fengel King, and to question everyone who would come and seek admittance to his hall. His was a position of great importance, as it was his own responsibility to judge whoever came to see the King, and he often had to trust to his own wisdom. From him you have learned that a man

of worth must be able to perceive a man's purpose, even when it is hidden behind a veil of crooked words.

Basic Attributes: Body 6, Heart, 6, Wits 2
Favoured Skill: Insight
Distinctive Features
(choose two Traits from those listed)
Curious, Generous, Grim, Keen-eyed, Reckless, Steadfast, Tall, Wilful

Typical Names and Adventuring Age

The Rohirrim place a great deal of reverence on their ancestors and forebears, and many of them are named after notable heroes or past kings of their people. More often than not they are known by just a single name, sometimes with a surname referencing their father ("Grimson") or their home ("of Westfold"). Sometimes they will have a more prosaic surname, based on some deed or misfortune (such as "Hammerhand," "the Old," "Wormtongue"). They place as much care and attention in naming their steeds as their children, although their horses are often named rather more descriptively than their offspring.

Male Names: Aldor, Brego, Brytta, Ceorl, Déor, Dúnhere, Elfhelm, Eofor, Éothain, Fastred, Folcred, Folda, Fréawine, Gamling, Gárulf, Gléowine, Guthláf, Herefara, Herubrand, Horn, Théoden, Wídfara, Wulf.

Female Names: Alflet, Ava, Beorwyn, Berghild, Celwen, Cyneswith, Déorwyn, Elfhild, Éofled, Éowyn, Frideswyn, Godwyf, Lefwyn, Merwyn, Morwed, Neriend, Sefled, Seledryd, Sigfled, Théodhild, Théodwyn; Wigbur, Wulfgith.

Horse Names: Arod, Hasufel, Felaróf, Firefoot, Shadowfax, Snowmane, Windfola.

Adventuring Age: 16-30

The Riders of Rohan don't usually become adventurers before their 16th year of age, when they are considered to be adults, and rarely continue beyond their forties when thoughts turn to looking after hearth and home.

Cultural Virtues - Riders of Rohan

The Riders of the Riddermark are Northmen, like their kin from Wilderland. They share their nobility of blood with the Bardings, their strength with the Beornings and their fierce determination with the Woodmen of Mirkwood.

Horse-herd of the Riddermark

Their horses were of great stature, strong and clean-limbed; their grey coats glistened, their long tails flowed in the wind, their manes were braided on their proud necks.

Horses are able to take care of themselves if left free to roam in the wild, but they improve rapidly when they are

New Fellowship Phase Undertaking: Train your Horses

A companion who is a *Horse-herd of the Riddermark* may retire to his stud-farm to train a mount to exhibit an exceptional characteristic, chosen from the list of Horse Qualities found on page 134 of *Horse-lords of Rohan*.

The training of a mount is accomplished as a prolonged action using the Craft skill, requiring a number of successes equal to twice the Status rating of the animal to be trained (*see Horse-lord of Rohan*, page 133). It is not necessary to reach the required number of successes in the same Fellowship phase: the horse-herd may take note of the successes gained so far to resume the work at a later Fellowship phase.

Horses may be attributed one Quality each. Once taught, a horse displays the selected Quality until Wounded. If it survives, the recovered horse may be attributed the same Quality by choosing this undertaking again (it is not possible to substitute a Quality for another).

raised and trained by a skilled horse-herd. You are learning how to properly breed and train horses in the tradition of the Riddermark and of the tamers of the wild horses of old.

Choose the *Train your Horses* Fellowship phase undertaking to retire to your stud-farm and apply your craft to the raising and breeding of foals, mares and stallions.

Household Esquire

...a man came summoning him, the king's esquire, to wait at the king's board.

A noble family has entrusted you with the raising and training of a young man from their household. The boy will serve you as your personal esquire, assisting you in all knightly matters. He will travel on his own riding horse (a rouncy) and wait at your table; he will make sure that your mount and belongings are ready at the start of a journey, that your weapons are sharpened and your armour mended before a battle, and that you wear your best clothes and bring your most precious drinking cup at a feast. In return, you will provide your esquire with a proper martial education and will care for and protect him at all times.

"You shall be my esquire, if you will."

Your esquire is a non-played character that is considered to be always there, but whose presence is never central to the gameplay. Strictly speaking, your esquire is not a character, not even a Loremaster character, but only an advantage (as are the servants of a Man of the Lake choosing the *Merchant Prince* virtue, see page 61). This notwithstanding, you are encouraged to develop his personality further, choosing for him a name, an age (usually, between 15 and 20 years), a backstory and a description for his appearance and personality.

When you are entitled to make a preliminary skill roll to determine your preparedness at either a journey, a combat or an encounter (see *The One Ring Roleplaying Game*, page 151), the presence of your esquire lets you roll an additional Success die (up to a maximum of 6).

Additionally, your esquire will promptly recover your mount should you fall from the saddle or be thrown down from it (you must spend an action to climb back upon your horse), he will bring you a spare shield or weapon should you see it smashed or dropped (it doesn't take you an entire action to recover your gear) and finally he will carry you from the field should you be knocked down by the blows of an enemy. While you won't allow your esquire to be directly engaged in combat, he is considered to be always about and eager to perform his duties.

King's Guard

But the men of the king's household they could not yet bring from the field...

The Lord of the Mark has granted you a permanent position among the Riders of the King's own House. While most young lords among the Rohirrim serve in the King's Guard for at least a few years, it is an honour to be granted to serve among them for life. Whenever you are in Edoras you train with some of the finest warriors of the Mark, and while away you are expected to enforce the King's will.

You learn one of the listed abilities for free when you first select this Virtue. You may later acquire another ability as your undertaking during a Fellowship phase by spending 1 Experience point. (You may acquire all three abilities in any order).

Horse-archery

You are allowed to use a bow from horseback from any combat stance, as if it were a close combat weapon. Additionally, the number of Success dice rolled on your ranged attacks using a bow are not limited by your **Athletics** score (see **Riding in Combat** in *Horse-Lords of Rohan*, page 135).

Shield-raising

When you are using a shield while mounted you double your shield's Parry modifier.

Sword and Spear

When you are using a sword or a spear from horseback your Success dice are not limited by your **Athletics** score (see **Riding in Combat** in *Horse-Lords of Rohan*, page 135).

Master of Doom

Doom hung over them, but they faced it silently.

Many among your folk believe that the destiny of every man is determined already when he comes first unto this world. But some scorn this belief, deeming that by his own strength a man may master his doom. Wise men consider this to be a thought born of vain pride, and dangerous. What you think is that if you cannot conquer your fate, you will fall while trying.

At the start of an Adventuring phase you may choose to reduce your maximum Hope by a number of points equal to your Valour score. Until the end of the phase, raise your maximum Endurance score by a number equal to twice your Valour score. At the end of the Adventuring phase, both your maximum Endurance and Hope scores reset to normal.

Old Songs and Children's Tales

"They are ... wise but unlearned, writing no books but singing many songs, after the manner of the children of Men before the Dark Years."

In these strange days you have learnt that the songs of the old days tell of many things that have been long forgotten, and what is often deemed to be the matter of legends may return to walk under the Sun. There is worth in each word of every rhyme, and wisdom in each dark stave of songs that have come down from parent to child in the House of Eorl.

When you succeed in a roll using **Inspire**, **Travel**, **Insight**, **Healing**, **Riddle** or **Lore**, check your **Song** rating: if it is equal to or higher than the rating of the skill you used, upgrade the quality of the roll by one level (a success becomes a great success, and a great success is turned into an extraordinary one). Additionally, if the roll produced a ᚠ you gain 1 point of Hope (you may gain a maximum of 1 Hope point per session this way).

When you choose this virtue, mark the skills listed above on your character sheet as a reminder. It is worth noting that using this ability does not imply that you suddenly burst into song, but rather that you run over snatches of old rhymes from your memory, murmuring a few words or maybe singing softly to yourself.

Cultural Rewards - Riders of Rohan

The armoury of the Lord of the Mark holds many treasures, guarded since a time when the Riders of Rohan wandered

the plains of Rhovanion and heroes riding wild horses dared to challenge the strength of Eastern kings and the blaze of Dragon-fire.

Ancient Mail from Gondor (mail armour)

Many armouries in Rohan hold a vast array of weapons, helms and suits of armour created by smiths from the south, gifts from Gondor to the Kings of the Riddermark. A warrior wearing one of those coats of bright mail on the battlefield is sure to lift the hearts of his companions.

When you are wearing your Ancient Mail from Gondor, you may employ the combat task *Rally Comrades* from a forward stance. When you choose to do so, you are also allowed to attack.

Glinting Spear (spear)

The Rohirrim wield tall spears of ash, topped with sharp heads of cold steel. Some have been brought out of the North by those riders who first followed Eorl, their hafts cut from the trees of the ancient Greenwood.

When you use a Glinting Spear to charge your enemies you get a +4 to your Injury rating.

Horsetailed Helm

The most valiant warriors of the Rohirrim wear gleaming helms crested with great plumes made from horse hair that make them stand out in the battlefield. You have been recognised with the honour to wear one in battle, and you have sworn to never retreat from the fray and lead your companions by example.

Raise your Standing by 1 point. Moreover, when you are wearing your Horsetailed Helm while fighting on horseback or on foot in a Forward stance, if your attack roll is a ᚠ you receive a bonus Success die to spend on any of your future rolls, or to give to another companion.

Men from Barrowdale Alternative Cultural Virtue

Players desiring to highlight the features of a hero hailing from the valley of Barrowdale when creating a new character may replace the *Horse-herd of the Riddermark* virtue with the alternative virtue described below.

Ominous Blessing

"...the Dead come seldom forth and only at times of great unquiet and coming death."

The inhabitants of Barrowdale live under the shadow of the Dwimorberg, and all their life they have felt the stare of cold and unforgiving eyes watching them from the dark below the Haunted Mountain. Some in the Riddermark say that the sad-faced dale-folk are bringers of ill-luck. What you know is that a gift of good fortune has started to favour you, or rather to work against those who oppose you.

Whenever you make a die roll and obtain an ᛟ result, you may turn it into a ᚠ result instead by gaining a Shadow point. The circumstances surrounding this are up to you to describe, but should involve whenever possible a stroke of misfortune befalling others and favouring you instead.

- Wayward Elves of Mirkwood -

There was a fire in their midst and there were torches fastened to some of the trees round about; but most splendid sight of all: they were eating and drinking merrily.

Not all Elves hear the call of the Sea and long for the West. Among the Elves of Mirkwood, a small faction are enamoured of the pleasures of Middle-earth and seek to live life to the fullest. Much to the displeasure of their King, they travel beneath the eaves of Mirkwood and find hidden places away from the Elf-path where they hold reckless celebrations. They believe themselves to be engaging in a great rebellion against the oppressive and growing shadow: expressing joy.

These are the Wayward Elves, kin to the Elves of Mirkwood in all but their beliefs. They deem that the greatest victory against the darkness can be achieved by the Firstborn with celebration, song and mirth. Though most of their kin regard them as foolish rabble and idle rebels, they see themselves simply as engaging in the great joys to which Elves were born: honouring song and starlight. They delight in all forms of merriment and seek to bring hope wherever they go, especially into the dark places of the world.

Most Wayward Elves are still young and fair of countenance. Unlike most other Elves, they seem undecided whether other folks are better suited as potential companions on their journey of joy and hope, or as the best targets for their japes.

Description

Though they are as hardy and fair as their kin, Wayward Elves are much less dour. They acknowledge as much as any other Elf that a shadow is falling upon their land – but they seek to combat it through less martial means.

They see themselves as dedicated as any warrior to the fight against the Shadow, but do not believe weapons of war to be the strongest tools in their arsenal. They revel in their immortality and eternal beauty, hoping it can be a symbol of the grace and perfection that once existed in the world.

Standard of Living

Like the Elves of Mirkwood, Wayward Elves enjoy a *Martial* standard of living, though they spend less of their resources on articles of war. Instead they wear fine garb rather than carrying keen weapons, and always they carry with them a musical instrument so that they can raise up their voice in celebration of the beauty of Middle-earth.

Wayward Elf Adventurers

Wayward Elves are much more likely to embrace a life of adventure than other Elves; certainly they are shunned as rebels and outcasts by their own kind. They seek to travel to faraway lands and look forward to interacting with other cultures of the world – especially other Elves, who they believe are far too caught up in departing Middle-earth.

As the years pass on, many Wayward Elves realise that they too may one day hear the call of the Western Lands and hope to see as much of Middle-earth as they might before leaving it forever.

Suggested Callings: *Scholar. Wanderer.* Songs and stories are of the highest value to the Wayward Elves. Their natural curiosity leads them to seek out new stories and new roads upon which they might travel in an effort to experience all that life has to offer.

Unusual Calling: *Slayer.* Wayward Elves rarely take up the sword and spear in direct combat against the agents of the Shadow, but instead use hope and wisdom to triumph against their foes.

What Galion Says...

The words of Galion, former Butler to King Thranduil...

- **Bardings:** "Now that their kingdom is restored and the Dragon is slain, these mortals leave their hiding places more often. Some of them even dare to hunt along the borders of our realm. The King seems not to mind... maybe someone should teach them."

- **Beornings:** "It is a shame to see a people who make such fine honeycakes and have the kinship of so many birds and beasts in their service to be so bent on savagery. What a waste."

- **Dwarves of the Lonely Mountain:** "Even in victory they toil in their halls, all thoughts on craft of war and arms. They once made harps of gold and bells of silver! They once sang songs of joy! Where now are those great ballads?"

- **Elves of Mirkwood:** "There is a shadow to be countered, surely; but we need not walk in darkness for all of our time here upon Middle-earth! Can we not set aside warfare for a season or two and enjoy the gifts of the world while they remain?"

- **Wayward Elves of Mirkwood**: "Another song! Another feast! Though the world may be fading, our voices may yet bring light to the world! Look up to the stars, my kinsmen, and see now that even in darkness there is always something beautiful to be seen!"

- **Woodmen of Wilderland:** "They dwell upon the eaves of our land, but they strike hard and true against the enemy. Need they be so dull and stern though? I often wonder if they have any time set aside for appreciating the joys of the world."

Cultural Blessing

Wayward Elves share the Folk of the Dusk Cultural Blessing with their kin from Mirkwood – see *The One Ring Roleplaying Game* page 55.

Starting Skill Scores

Common Skills

Copy the following skill ranks onto the character sheet and underline the favoured skill:

Awe	2	Inspire	0	Persuade	0
Athletics	3	Travel	1	Stealth	2
Awareness	2	Insight	0	Search	0
Explore	1	Healing	0	Hunting	2
Song	2	Courtesy	0	Riddle	2
Craft	0	Battle	0	Lore	2

Weapon Skills

Choose one of the following two Weapon skill sets, and record it on the character sheet:

1) (Spears) 2, Sword 1, Dagger 1
2) Bow 2, Sword 1, Dagger 1

Specialities

Choose two Traits from:

Cooking, Elven-lore, Fire-making, Minstrelsy, Mirkwood-lore, Story-telling

Backgrounds

1 - Warrior Poet

You feel a rhythm on the battle field, the clashing of swords your drum, the cries of battle your song. A fierce warrior poet, you revel in the deeds of your folk, be it bravery in the face of an ancient Enemies, or strength of arms on the field of battle. You find inspiration in the heart of conflict, and you are happy to brave it in order to bring back rhymes and staves of exultation.

Basic Attributes: Body 5, Heart 2, Wits 7
Favoured Skill: Battle
Distinctive Features:
(choose two Traits from those listed)
Curious, Determined, Energetic, Proud, Suspicious, Swift, Vengeful, Wilful

2 - Minstrel of the Wood

Ever the first to know a secret, ever the first to tell it in dance and song and rhyme, you were always a teller of tales and a singer of songs.

Too much for the staid company of Thranduil's court, you have abandoned that cloistered life for the rawness and richness of life beyond. You seek out its riddles, stories, dances and songs and impart them to any who will listen. Outside the royal court you have found an audience of like-minded free spirits: your kin who seek a life beyond the ordinary.

Basic Attributes: Body 5, Heart 4, Wits 5
Favoured Skill: Riddle
Distinctive Features:
(choose two Traits from those listed)
Clever, Curious, Elusive, Fair, Keen-eyed, Secretive, Suspicious, Vengeful

3 - Royal Valet

You were a valet at the service of Thranduil's royal court, until a lady in a high office felt insulted by your behaviour, described by her as 'ill-advised'. Since that day, you have left behind the gates of the halls of your Lord, vowing never to return. Who needs a palace when you can tread the many-pillared paths of Mirkwood? Your kin was born to see the stars, not to skulk in a darkened fortress under the earth.

Basic Attributes: Body 5, Heart 3, Wits 6
Favoured Skill: Awe
Distinctive Features:
(choose two Traits from those listed)
Curious, Energetic, Fierce, Keen-eyed, Proud, Reckless, Swift, Wrathful

4 - Root Seeker

You have listened to the words of the seers of Mirkwood, and read ancient chronicles in the Halls of the Woodland Realm. But you long to hear the tales that are told beyond the borders of your land and hear the songs that your kin compose in Lothlórien and Rivendell! Your folk is ancient beyond the reckoning of Mortals, and you yearn to discover your roots.

Basic Attributes: Body 4, Heart 4, Wits 6
Favoured Skill: Lore
Distinctive Features:
(choose two Traits from those listed)
Clever, Curious, Determined, Eager, Fair, Merry, Nimble, Quick of Hearing

5 - Hunter

You delight in the thrill of the chase, with bow or spear, hawk or hound and, for those who dare to brave its depths, Mirkwood is the greatest of hunting grounds. You have rejected the tired and formulaic hunts of Thranduil's kingdom for the wilder hunt, unplanned and without pageantry, deep in the heart of the forest. You against the Wild.

Basic Attributes: Body 4, Heart 3, Wits 7
Favoured Skill: Hunting
Distinctive Features
(choose two Traits from those listed)
Adventurous, Cunning, Curious, Fierce, Nimble, Secretive, Wilful, Wrathful

6 - Wanderer

You have always felt more inspired by the night sky than the trees of Mirkwood. Your eyes are ever turned upwards and you have long wandered under the light of the Moon. For many long nights you have been drawn deeper and deeper into the darkness of Mirkwood, yet you have always found your way back to a place of safety. But the stars are pulling you further and further away, further down the road and towards the horizon.

Basic Attributes: Body 6, Heart 2, Wits 6
Favoured Skill: Explore
Distinctive Features
(choose two Traits from those listed)
Adventurous, Cunning, Curious, Eager, Elusive, Merry, Quick of Hearing, Reckless

Typical Names and Adventuring Age

Close kin of the Elves of Mirkwood, the Wayward ELves also share their names and adventuring expectations. (See The One Ring Roleplaying Game, page 58 for more on Elf naming conventions and Adventuring age.)

Male Names: Amras, Aredhel, Beleganor, Belegon, Calanhir, Carmagor, Dagorhir, Durandir, Edrahil, Ellahir, Fincalan, Fuindor, Galdagor, Galdor, Hallas, Hirimlad, Ithildir, Lascalan, Linaith, Mablin, Malanor, Nauros, Orgalad, Pelegorn, Sargon.

Female Names: Anwen, Arbereth, Berúthiel, Baraniel, Calanril, Celenneth, Elnîth, Eraniel, Finduilas, Gilraen, Gilraeth, Gloredhel, Idril, Ioreth, Ivorwen, Lôrwend, Lothíriel, Luindîs, Meneloth, Moriel, Morwen, Narieth, Narniel, Orothêl, Tarandîs.

Adventuring Age: 100-500

Elves are invulnerable to age, and may become adventurers at any time after they reach adulthood (at about a century of age).

Cultural Virtues - Wayward Elves

Wayward Elves may pick the new Virtue described below, as well as the following ones listed on pages 108-109 of *The One Ring Roleplaying Game*: *Deadly Archery, Elvish Dreams, The Speakers* and *Wood-elf Magic*. (*The Call of Mirkwood* replaces the *Shadow Bane* Virtue.)

The Call of Mirkwood

They differed from the High Elves of the West, and were more dangerous and less wise.

You think your fate and that of your people should be that of enjoying life to the fullest, as long as Mirkwood and the world endure. You accept the price of this choice: you will dwindle and fade until you become a living memory, a fairy who lingers yet in the shadows of the trees. For the moment though, your fading just makes it harder for others to heed your footsteps, or to see you when you choose not to be seen.

You may spend a point of Hope to automatically succeed at any **Stealth** roll. Additionally, when you make a roll using a Movement or a Survival skill, you ignore the effects of being Weary.

Unfortunately, your fading does not pass unnoticed; other Elves recognise your refusal to depart into the West with a simple look, and treat you as a wild and wilful creature, not deserving trust: your Valour and Wisdom are considered to be equal to 1 for the purposes of determining the Tolerance of an encounter with Elves.

Cultural Rewards - Wayward Elves

Wayward Elves possessing the *Call of Mirkwood* virtue may pick the new Cultural Reward described below, as well as the ones listed on pages 117-118 of *The One Ring Roleplaying Game*.

Wine of the Dark Mountains

The Wayward Elves of Mirkwood favour a particular vintage of wine, a dark, filling beverage they distil from a secret vineyard on the lower slopes of the Mountains of Mirkwood. Drinking this potent wine induces a cold, heartless fury, a sentiment that a reckless warrior exploits to endure the stress of a fight.

When you drink from the Wine of the Dark Mountains before a battle, you start combat with an additional number of temporary Endurance points equal to twice your Valour score.

- Wild Hobbits of the Anduin Vales -

"There were probably many more Outsiders scattered about in the West of the World in those days than the people of the Shire imagined."

Few who dwell in Wilderland have heard of the Hobbits of the Shire. What they do not realise is that there are a few, rare Hobbits living much closer to them, hidden in the shadows of the Gladden Fields. Akin to the ancestors of the Shire-folk, they are what is left of a quiet-footed little people, who have hidden from the growing darkness in Mirkwood for much of the Third Age, scratching out an existence by remaining unnoticed by the eyes of both the great and the terrible.

The Wild Hobbits of the Anduin Vales dwell in holes dug in the river-banks, or under the eaves of Mirkwood. These are not comfortable Hobbit-holes, but rather well-hidden hollows, invisible to the eyes of even the keen-sighted Elves. For unlike their distant relatives in the peaceful West, Wild Hobbits need be ever-vigilant against the many threats of the Wild. Indeed, many travellers have passed near their refuges and never been aware of sharp eyes upon them.

As secretive and wary of strangers as they are, they yet share many values with their kin in the Shire. Wild Hobbits deeply value family bonds, and each of their communities is led by an elder matriarch, a grandmother of the folk wise in lore and craft.

Description

Wild Hobbits dress in simple outfits of spun cloth or crudely cured furs. In contrast to the round, cheery faces of the Shire Hobbits, Wild Hobbits are often gaunt and serious. Wide, wild eyes are sharp and untrusting, and their bodies are rarely plump – save for elders who have earned a place of admiration among their kin. They always carry simple tools of survival, most often fishing tackle and simple hand tools, and move about the watercourses of the Vales of Anduin on little boats of reeds.

Standard of Living

Life in the Anduin Vales leaves no room for excess. While Wild Hobbits value the rare treasures that their grandmothers and family members may carry, these things are just that: rare. Because they have no place in their lives for the burden of treasure, all Wild Hobbits live with a *Frugal* standard of living.

Wild Hobbit Adventurers

Wild Hobbits value family above all else and have a deep and abiding distrust of outsiders. As such, they rarely leave their holes to become adventurers. Those who do have often been separated from their beloved family. Some may be the sole survivor of a village who has been forced upon the road because they have no other home, others might be searching Wilderland in the hopes of finding a new home for their kin. Whatever the reason, a Wild Hobbit adventurer is a rare sight in Wilderland.

Suggested Callings: *Scholar, Wanderer.* Wild Hobbits are most at home in the wild, their natural gift for sensing the corruption of the land giving them an edge that few other cultures can claim to rival. Wild Hobbits may not be a literate folk, but they have an ancient tradition of storytelling and riddling.

Unusual Calling: *Treasure Hunter.* Wild Hobbits do not put much stock in gold and jewels, for what good is it if it cannot be eaten? They do not often go off searching for treasure.

What the Matriarch Says...

- **Beornings:** "Savage warriors! When you trespass into what they consider their land, they do not care whether you are an Orc or something else. So, when you see them, hide! Quickly!"
- **Dwarves:** "If you want to know what you shouldn't do around our land, just watch them. They march in the open, stamping their feet with their noisy boots and breathing loudly. Wherever they go, trouble follows."
- **Elves of Mirkwood:** "We see them coming this far south, at times. They go about as if this was their land, with sad looks on their bright faces."
- **Riders of Rohan:** "South dwells a Big Folk of horse-tamers and riders. When they are not riding one of their huge beasts they are like all the others - blundering fools with bright mail and swords."
- **Wild Hobbits:** "As long as we remain hidden, we will survive! A mouse may find meat upon the bones when the cat has cast aside the fish. Always watch. Always listen. Always have a place to hide."
- **Woodmen of Wilderland:** "They are brave and strong, and respect us, even if most of them think we're just a legend to tell to their children."

Cultural Blessing

- Shadow-sight -

The Wild Hobbits of the Vales of Anduin who survived the coming of the Shadow over Mirkwood have been made tougher by the experience, and are more aware of its threats. They have learned to recognise the presence of its minions and the traces of his devilry.

When a Wild Hobbit makes a **Hunting** or **Awareness** roll to track or perceive the proximity of an evil creature or a servant of the Shadow, he adds his Attribute score to the result, as if enjoying an Attribute bonus. Additionally, when making a Corruption test to resist the taint of a blighted place, wild Hobbits can roll the Feat die twice and keep the best result.

Starting Skill Scores

Common Skills

Copy the following skill ranks onto the character sheet and underline the favoured skill:

Awe	0	Inspire	1	Persuade	0
Athletics	2	Travel	0	Stealth	3
Awareness	2	Insight	1	Search	2
Explore	2	Healing	1	Hunting	2
Song	1	Courtesy	1	Riddle	2
Craft	0	Battle	0	Lore	0

Weapon Skills

Choose one of the following two Weapon skill sets, and record it on the character sheet:

1) Short Sword 2, Bow 1, Dagger 1
2) Bow 2, Short Sword 1, Dagger 1

Specialities

Choose two Traits from:

Beast-lore, Boating, Fishing, Gardener, Story-telling, Tunnelling

Backgrounds

1 - Lone Survivor

The Goblins came down from the mountains and this time your family was unable to hide. They swept across your community with sword and torch, leaving fire and slaughter in their wake. Whether by stealth or because you were overlooked in the carnage, you survived – but you are the only one. Now you look to Wilderland, hoping to find a your place in the world alone.

Basic Attributes: Body 3, Heart 6, Wits 5
Favoured Skill: Awareness
Distinctive Features:
(choose two Traits from those listed)
Cautious, Elusive, Gruff, Hardy, Keen-eyed, Quick of Hearing, Swift, Wary

2 - Healing Hands

The head of your family is an ancient matriarch, learned in the healing of illnesses and the mending of wounds. Since you were a child, she sent you about to gather useful herbs and roots for her, and she kept you close when she was preparing her remedies. In particular, she taught you how to prepare her special broth, a prodigious fish soup that helped many among your folk to survive the coldest winters.

Basic Attributes: Body 4, Heart 5, Wits 5
Favoured Skill: Healing
Distinctive Features:
(choose two Traits from those listed)
Cautious, Eager, Nimble, Robust, Secretive, Steadfast, Trusty, Wary

3 - Roots and Beginnings

You have always been the most inquisitive among your many brothers ans sisters. Your elders told you that the land where you fish and hunt and burrow has seen the passage of many armies, and that it is easy to find proof of their passing, if you know where to look. You, you leave no stone unturned, no cave unexplored and no pool undisturbed, looking for those treasures that one day will be part of your gear, when you will leave your land to go and seek adventure.

Basic Attributes: Body 3, Heart 7, Wits 4
Favoured Skill: Search
Distinctive Features:
(choose two Traits from those listed)
Adventurous, Bold, Forthright, Merry, Quick of Hearing, Robust Suspicious, Wary

4 - Wilderland Look-out

The shelters of your people are simple things, and each Hobbit of the Vale is always looking to stay one step ahead of the dangerous things that wander the Wild. You are a look-out for your family, searching along the banks of the Great River for new locations that have suitable fishing holes and hidden burrows where they can find safety, if only for a small time.

Basic Attributes: Body 2, Heart 6, Wits 6
Favoured Skill: Hunting

Distinctive Features:
(choose two Traits from those listed)
Bold, Grim, Hardy, Keen-eyed, Patient, Steadfast, Swift, Wary

5 - Clever-handed

For many long years you watched the water flow, weaving baskets for your folk while sitting on the river-banks. At times, you sat for hours on end, with only your cunning hands moving expertly, weaving grasses and rushes, reeds and vines. One day, you spied the passing of a peculiar group, a half-dozen Men, carrying shields and weapons. They didn't see you, even if they camped at a stone's throw from you. You will never forget the gleaming steel of their swords, nor the stern expression on their faces. Seeing them, you realised that you won't have to flee from danger all your life: the Shadow can be faced, and conquered.

Basic Attributes: Body 4, Heart 6, Wits 4
Favoured Skill: Craft
Distinctive Features:
(choose two Traits from those listed)
Clever, Elusive, Forthright, Grim, Gruff, Secretive, Suspicious, Wary

6 - Wandering Fisherman

While many of your kind are made bitter by your folk's constant struggle against the Wild, you are of a lighter heart. You travel, often alone and to the confustication of your family, up and down the banks of the Anduin in search of the best watering hole in Wilderland. You know all the best fishing spots and have even turned an eye to other waters. Perhaps other lakes, rivers and tributaries can offer new tastes that you can bring home to brighten the dinner table.

Basic Attributes: Body 2, Heart 7, Wits 5
Favoured Skill: Travel
Distinctive Features:
(choose two Traits from those listed)
Adventurous, Clever, Eager, Merry, Nimble, Patient, True-hearted, Wary

Typical Names and Adventuring Age

The names used by the Wild Hobbits of the Anduin Vales are similar to the more heroic and high-sounding ones used in the Shire, like Gormadoc or Odovacar, and especially to those of the Men of the Vales of the Great River – the Beornings and the Woodmen of Mirkwood. In fact, to choose a Wild Hobbit's first name you can refer to those lists (see *The One Ring*, page 46, for example).

First names are often shortened ('Gary' for Garivald, for example), while family names are not used, as individuals are commonly referred to as 'the son of...' or 'the daughter of...', or are identified by their crafts (Gary, the leech).

See *The One Ring Roleplaying Game*, page 65, for more on Hobbit naming conventions and adventuring expectations.

Cultural Virtues - Wild Hobbits

Wild Hobbits may pick the new Virtue described below, as well as the ones listed on pages 110-111 of *The One Ring Roleplaying Game*.

Vexing Riddler

He knew, of course, that the riddle-game was sacred and of immense antiquity, and even wicked creatures were afraid to cheat when they played at it.

Riddle-craft is a respected tradition among your folk and is commonly used to pass the long nights in their river-burrows.

You know well the ancient laws that govern riddling, and you are capable of spinning riddles that can vex even the keenest listener. You twist words and conceal intent with great skill.

When you are using your **Riddle** skill to interpret or spin a riddle, you can roll the Feat die twice and keep the best result. Additionally, if during an encounter you challenge a Loremaster character to a riddling contest (making a **Riddle** roll against a difficulty set following the guidelines found on page 216 of *The One Ring Roleplaying Game*, or as a direct, opposed roll if the opposing character possesses a Custom score) and win, the outcome of the encounter is improved by one degree of success (a Success becomes a Great Success, etc.).

Cultural Rewards - Wild Hobbits

Wild Hobbits may pick the new Cultural Reward described below, as well as the ones listed on pages 118 of *The One Ring Roleplaying Game* (the player and the Loremaster should rework the description of those Rewards, to suit the Gladden Fields geographical area).

Barbed Fishing Spear

The Hobbits of the Anduin Vale are expert fishermen and craft excellent barbed spears of reed and wood to capture their prey. You are the bearer of one such spears, and it serves you well in your hunt for sweet and juicy fish. With it, you are able to pull a fine meal from even the most unlikely waters.

If you are a Huntsman during a journey and you are travelling across an area with access to a watercourse or lake, you are considered to succeed automatically at any **Hunting** roll.

advanced - cultures -

The final two heroic cultures presented in this section introduce the Dúnedain of the lost realm of Arnor and the High Elves of Rivendell as playable characters. While their presentation follows the general format used for all heroic cultures encountered so far, both character types require a number of special rules.

Experienced players and Loremasters will notice how several characteristics of both the Rangers of the North and the High Elves of Rivendell break some of the limits to character creation set by the core rules. As many have noticed during play, those limits were not introduced to diminish the fun of playing in Middle-earth, but rather to help everyone involved in the game experience a style of play that was as close to the spirit of the books as possible.

Having the players choose from a selection of strictly balanced heroic cultures mostly hailing from the same geographical area produces a more focused game, a playing experience firmly set within the perspective of a first-time adventurer.

Now, neither a Ranger nor a High Elf fits the definition of 'first-time adventurer'. The Dúnedain of the North roam the land of Eriador hunting for their enemies, and may travel much farther if their duty requires them to do so. If there is anything close to full-time heroes in Middle-earth it's the Rangers. Similarly, even the younger High Elves have witnessed hundreds of years of history and possess superior powers.

So, how does either a Dúnadan or a High Elf fit into a company of heroes? There are several options to choose from: maybe a new player has joined your group and needs a character able to compete with the other companions right from the start, or your campaign just saw the company cross over from Wilderland to Eriador, and a Ranger or a High Elf companion might help the heroes in making the transition. Whatever the choice, it is strongly suggested not to add either a Ranger or a High Elf character to a brand new company, and to limit their presence to – at most – one or two individuals, if the original spirit of the game is to be preserved. Nothing ruins the wonder of a campaign built around young heroes seeking adventure more than the introduction of several veterans of many battles against the Shadow.

The paragraphs below set a number of game mechanics that apply exclusively to members of the 'advanced' cultures presented in this book.

Modified Experience Points Costs

Heroes belonging to an 'advanced' culture spend their accumulated Experience points very much like all the other character types: to gain a new rank in either Wisdom or Valour, and to enhance their proficiency in their Weapon skills. The difference is that it takes longer for a Ranger or a High Elf hero to improve his abilities. The Experience Points Cost table below indicates the modified rates for raising Weapon skills and Cultural weapon skills, and to gain new ranks in either Valour or Wisdom.

Experience Points Costs for Rangers and High Elves

Valour and Wisdom Rank	Weapon Skill Level	Cost to Attain New Rank or Level
-	♦	3
2	♦♦	6
3	♦♦♦	9
4	♦♦♦♦	14
5	♦♦♦♦♦	21
6	♦♦♦♦♦♦	32

Allegiance of the Dúnedain

'Lonely men are we, Rangers of the wild, hunters - but hunters ever of the servants of the Enemy...'

The Rangers of the North are the last remnant of the Dúnedain of Arnor, and are devoted to fight Sauron and his minions by an ancient tradition of war and strife. To a certain extent, this obligation sets the Rangers apart from other adventurers, as they do not share easily their burden with others.

- A Ranger who joins a company contributes normally to the creation of the Fellowship pool, but is not allowed to spend Fellowship points to recover lost Hope. Note that Rangers enjoy all the usual benefits deriving from having another hero in the company as their Fellowship focus.

High-Elves and Shadow

She was brought back to Imladris, and though healed in body by Elrond, lost all delight in Middle-earth, and the next year went to the Havens and passed over Sea.

High Elves cannot ever truly forget the taint of the Shadow once it has left its mark on their spirit. For this reason, High Elf characters cannot ever choose the *Heal Corruption* Fellowship phase undertaking. The only way they know to endure the burden of Shadow and remain in Middle-earth is to slowly 'distance' themselves from the world.

- Players may reduce the effects of corruption on their High Elf hero as an undertaking during a Fellowship phase:

The player chooses a Common skill and draws a black dot (or a small Eye...) to the left of its name to decrease their character's Shadow point total by a number based on the table below. It is not possible to mark the same skill twice.

Skill Rating	Shadow Reduction
1	1
2	3
3	6
4	10
5	15
6	21

Idril's Shadow score has been 8 points since her company's journey to the Mountains of Mirkwood. Fearing the consequences that further exposure to Shadow might bring, Idril's player decides to do something about it. After a thorough analysis of her character sheet, she decides to mark her skill of ***Insight*** *♦♦♦, a choice that lets her get rid of 6 points. Her Shadow score is thus reduced to 2.*

Using Marked Skills

When an High Elf makes use of a marked skill, there is always the possibility that the hero is overwhelmed by a sense of hopelessness and fails to find the motivation to do the deed.

- Whenever a High Elf hero uses a marked skill outside of an Elven sanctuary, all rolls producing an result gain him 1 point of Shadow and are considered to fail automatically.

Idril has got rid of her fear and doubts, but has left behind herself part of her life in Middle-earth - when Idril will get to use her ***Insight*** *skill, on an result she will feel an overpowering sadness that will prevent her from completing her task...*

- High Elves of Rivendell -

"And here in Rivendell there live still some of his chief foes: the Elven-wise, lords of the Eldar from beyond the furthest seas."

Elrond Halfelven founded Imladris, the Last Homely House, in an age of darkness and fear, when all that was good and fair in the world retreated before the growing power of the Enemy. This place has ever been a secret refuge for the High Elves, the eldest and fairest of all Eldar.

In Rivendell they have dwelt in peace for many long centuries, but as the Third Age draws to a close, they have come to realise that the songs they sing in the Hall of Fire will soon become sorrowful dirges once more. Remembering past horrors and the ruin brought by the corruption of the Shadow, they lament what the future may bring – though let us not say that they are afraid. The High Elves are fair and tall, proud and powerful. They will not cower before the rising darkness out of the East.

Yet the wanderer who comes to Rivendell finds the High Elves to be creatures of contradiction. One moment they are merry and fair, chiding the younger races in song and jest. The next their faces turn grim and their words stern as they speak of the fading of the world.

Their long reckoning of the past ages of Middle-earth has taught them to savour each day to the fullest and face each sorrow with majesty and grace. More than any other folk in Middle-earth they know the virtue of hope and the power of shadow.

Description

In Rivendell can be found Elves with long, flowing golden locks, silver tresses and hair the colour of the dark shadows of twilight. They are at once venerable and noble as a king, yet hale and hearty as a warrior. They are tall and lithe, yet possess great strength and endurance. All High Elves of Rivendell have one thing in common: their pale faces are ageless, neither old nor young, yet written on them are the memories of both gladness and sorrow.

Standard of Living

The halls of Rivendell are filled with all manner of relics and treasure of the olden days, preserved by Elrond and his kin. Although dwindling in number, the High Elves of Imladris still craft beautiful objects and they have little need of anything from beyond their borders. Their culture's economy is ranked as *Prosperous*.

High Elf Adventurers

High Elves from Rivendell may be encountered beyond the Vale of Imladris, when they tire of their retreat, and start wandering across Eriador before finally returning over the Great Sea. They call themselves Exiles, and as they tarry in Middle-earth a while they sometimes join or help groups of adventurers. Younger High Elves, such as the sons of Elrond, may be found abroad, hunting Orcs or seeking lost lore, but always at the behest of their Master.

Suggested Callings: *Scholar, Wanderer.* Those High Elves that journey forth from Rivendell do so either to enjoy fully the closing years of their stay upon the shores of Middle-earth, or to gather what lost lore might be found in the ruins of a bygone age, to better confront the encroaching Shadow.

Unusual Calling: *Warden.* Even more than the other members of the Fair Folk, the High Elves are often little concerned with the ways of any other creature upon earth. They feel they have their own labours, and certainly they had their share of sorrows, even without meddling with the lives of other beings. This doesn't mean that the Elves won't march to war should a dire need arise, but they will always draw their blades with a heavy heart, knowing from experience how many victories proved fruitless in the past.

What Elrond Halfelven Says...

- **Beornings:** "Beorn has opened the passes over the mountains. Travellers and adventurers from the East may now find their way to Imladris. Whether this is a good thing or not remains yet to be seen."
- **Dwarves of the Lonely Mountain:** "Against all hope, there is again a King under the Mountain. Will the Dwarves of Erebor honour the memory of Thorin, or will his dream be tainted by stiff necks, cold hearts and the desire to shut the rest of the world outside their stone doors?"
- **Elves of Mirkwood:** "Thranduil has let the fate of his father guide his choices as a ruler. His first concern is to guard his people, and this I cannot condemn. But hiding and ignoring the needs of other folks won't make winning the coming war any easier."
- **High Elves of Rivendell:** "We have built this place hoping that never again will anyone in Middle-earth fall prey to the lure of our Enemy, nor listen to him or serve him. That is why we are accounted among his chief foes."
- **Hobbits of the Shire:** "When Bilbo Baggins left his comfortable Hobbit-hole he didn't know how dangerous his life would become. I hear there are others who are following his example, and I am sure they too cannot imagine what lies ahead of them. Still, I have no doubt that they would still wish to go: there is an adventurous side to any Hobbit."
- **Woodmen of Wilderland:** "Amongst all Mortals, the Woodmen are the ones who know our Enemy best, as he has been at their gates for many long years. Even though the Hill of Sorcery now lies deserted, shadows still slither forth from its pits."

Cultural Blessing

- Against the Unseen -

"...the Dead ride behind. They have been summoned..."

High Elves can perceive creatures that dwell in the wraithworld, be they spirits or ghosts, even when they are

normally invisible to the eyes of the living (including Unclad and Invisible Ringwraiths).

Additionally, High Elves are considered to succeed automatically at any Fear test forced upon them by an undead creature.

Starting Skill Scores

Common Skills

Copy the following skill ranks onto the character sheet and underline the favoured skill:

Awe	2	Inspire	0	Persuade	0
Athletics	2	Travel	1	Stealth	0
Awareness	2	Insight	0	Search	0
Explore	0	Healing	2	Hunting	0
Song	2	Courtesy	1	Riddle	0
Craft	2	Battle	2	Lore	3

Weapon Skills

Choose one of the following two Weapon skill sets, and record it on the character sheet:

1) (Spears) 2, Long Sword 1, Bow 1, Dagger 1
2) Great Bow 2, (Swords) 1, Spear 1, Dagger 1

Specialities

Choose two Traits from:

Elven Lore, Eriador Lore, Enemy of Sauron, Herb-lore, Smith-craft, Story-telling.

New Trait: Enemy of Sauron

All creatures of any kind recognise you as an enemy of Sauron. His servants fear you, and will avoid confronting you, unless confident in their superiority. When facing proof of the presence of the Enemy, you cannot refrain yourself and must take action.

Backgrounds

1 - Counsellor of Elrond

Elrond is not so proud that he would act hastily without consulting those whose opinions he trusts, and who would not hesitate to point out the flaws within his plans. You are one of those to whom Elrond turns when he has need of advice, your honesty and fairness valued as much as your discretion and wits.

Basic Attributes: Body 5, Heart 5, Wits 7
Favoured Skill: Persuade
Distinctive Features:
(choose two Traits from those listed)
Cautious, Fair-spoken, Just, Patient, Proud, Quick of Hearing, Secretive, True-hearted

2 - Elf-lord

To the eyes of Mortals you are as a lord amongst princes. Fair of features and noble of heart, yet terrible to behold when angered. You have seen the glory of Eregion, and the golden armies of your forefathers, but now all that once was great is faded and all that you once ruled naught but ruins.

Basic Attributes: Body 6, Heart 5, Wits 6
Favoured Skill: Awe
Distinctive Features:
(choose two Traits from those listed)
Fair, Fierce, Honourable, Lordly, Proud, Stern, Vengeful, Wrathful

3 - Heir of Gondolin

A long time ago your kin dwelt in Beleriand, where they were smiths of great renown. They laboured long in their proud cities, hidden from the world by a veil of secrecy, but this didn't save them from their dark fate, and now those lands are lost under the Sea, along with the great works of your fathers. Your hands cannot dare to replicate the beauty of that bygone age, but this knowledge does not prevent you from trying.

Basic Attributes: Body 7, Heart 3, Wits 7
Favoured Skill: Craft
Distinctive Features:
(choose two Traits from those listed)
Cautious, Elusive, Grim, Keen-eyed, Nimble, Patient, Proud, Secretive

4 - Vengeful Kin

You remember well the suffering the Orcs caused your kin, when they tortured and tormented them in their

dark dungeons. Although you freed them, their faces were forever marred by the pain they suffered and they soon departed for the West. As long as such evil remains in Middle-earth, you cannot contemplate following them.

Basic Attributes: Body 6, Heart 3, Wits 8
Favoured Skill: Battle
Distinctive Features:
(choose two Traits from those listed)
Fierce, Grim, Lordly, Proud, Stern, Suspicious, Swift, Vengeful

5 - Wayward Wanderer

It has been many long years since you have called any one place home, travelling the backroads and Elven-paths of Middle-earth with the Wandering Companies. You have enjoyed fully what light is left in the world, singing and laughing and playing under the starlight. One day, the light will fade and you will return to the West, but not today.

Basic Attributes: Body 6, Heart 4, Wits 7
Favoured Skill: Travel
Distinctive Features:
(choose two Traits from those listed)
Elusive, Fair, Honourable, Merry, Nimble, Proud, Swift, True-hearted

6 - Guardian of Imladris

Outside the secret vale of Rivendell, the Third Age passes and stone turns to dust, iron to rust and paper to ash. Ancient wisdom slips away like sand in an hourglass, yet who is to say which secret might yet prove vital in the hour of need? You have welcomed many wanderers at the doors of Imladris, travellers who journeyed countless miles seeking to hear the advice of Elrond and consult the lore of forgotten ages. You met everyone with the right words, at the same time trying to lay bare their true motives. Let whoever tried to betray your trust beware your wrath, for you are as kind as you are quick to anger.

Basic Attributes: Body 5, Heart 4, Wits 8
Favoured Skill: Lore
Distinctive Features:
(choose two Traits from those listed)
Fair-spoken, Just, Keen-eyed, Merry, Proud, Quick of Hearing, Suspicious, Wrathful

High Elven Names

Most names below belong to important Elves, and should only be used as examples to create new ones (Elven naming conventions are too complicated to summarise here).

Male Names: Amroth, Beleg, Cirdan, Daeron, Edrahil, Finrod, Guilin, Lindir, Maeglin, Saeros.

Female Names: Arwen, Berúthiel, Celebrían, Celebrindal, Elwing, Finduilas, Galadriel, Idril, Nimloth, Nimrodel.

Adventuring Age: 500-1000

The High Elves of Rivendell are creatures from another age. They may become adventurers any time after they reach adulthood, although they are unlikely to venture beyond Imladris until they are half a millennia or more old. Even though a starting High Elf is far more 'experienced' than those of other cultures, he is still young and weak compared to his elder kin, and so is unlikely to be more than a thousand years old.

Previous Experience

Players creating a High Elf of Rivendell receive a higher amount of points to define the previous experiences of their character.

Players have 16 points to spend on raising their skills. The cost of raising each skill is shown in the two tables below. The first table gives the costs for Common skill levels, while the second shows the costs for Weapon skill levels. (The costs are the usual ones for all other Heroic Cultures, as described on page 10, with the difference that a player creating a High Elf of Rivendell might invest his points to start the game with a Common skill at ♦♦♦♦♦♦, or a Weapon skill at ♦♦♦♦).

Common Skill level to attain	Cost
♦	1 point
♦♦	2 points
♦♦♦	3 points
♦♦♦♦	4 points
♦♦♦♦♦	5 points
♦♦♦♦♦♦	6 points

Weapon Skill level to attain	Cost
♦	2 points
♦♦	4 points
♦♦♦	6 points
♦♦♦♦	10 points

Cultural Virtues - High Elves of Rivendell

Artificer of Eregion

Many eyes were turned to Elrond in fear and wonder as he told of the Elven-smiths of Eregion and their friendship with Moria, and their eagerness for knowledge.

You are studying the ancient craft of the Elven-smiths of Eregion, the greatest craftsmen of your kin. You learn how to Evaluate Treasure when you first select this virtue.

You may later master the secret of how to Enhance Weapons as your undertaking, and spending 1 Experience point during a Fellowship phase; finally, you discover how to Enchant Weapons by spending another Experience point as another undertaking during a later Fellowship phase.

Evaluate Treasure

You recognise the runes and secret symbols employed by the artificers of old to mark their work.

- When you are allowed to make a Magical Treasure roll, you may roll 1 additional Success die. This bonus die does not count towards the expenditure of Experience points in the case of the discovery of a Wondrous Artefact or a Famous Weapon and Armour.

Enhance Weapons

Choose the *Elven-smithing* undertaking to retire to your smithy and customise a weapon to suit the combat characteristics of its wielder.

- When you first enhance a weapon in your smithy, its user gains a bonus of +1 to all his attack rolls using the customised weapon. You may later undertake to improve the same weapon once again, for a total bonus of +2.

These improvement bonuses are applied until the hero wielding the weapon acquires a new level in the related Weapon skill. When this happens, the companion loses the associated bonuses, but you may eventually enhance it again, repeating the customising procedure.

Note that while certainly skilful, you cannot improve the craftsmanship of old: you may only enhance a weapon that does not possess Enchanted Qualities.

Enchant Weapons

Choose the Elven-smithing undertaking to use all your cunning as an artificer and work some of the light of the Blessed Realm into a weapon. The improved weapon now may harm creatures that would be normally vulnerable only to weapons possessing Enchanted Qualities (like Wraiths and Ghosts, for example).

Beauty of the Stars

Pippin afterwards recalled little of either food or drink for his mind was so filled with the light upon the Elf-faces.

Your beauty is so unearthly that all but the hardest-hearted of Mortals can gaze upon you and not be swayed – or bewitched – by your countenance, even if afterwards they retain only a vague memory of anything but your glory. Raise your maximum Hope score by 2 points. Additionally, you receive a bonus Success die to use during the introduction step of any Encounter. Finally, for every ᚠ result on the Feat die you get during the interaction step pick one of the following bonuses:

- When resolving the encounter, the company counts as having scored an additional success.
- After resolving an encounter with Mortals, choose a subject: that character retains only the vaguest memory of what was said or agreed. This effect counts as a magical virtue for the purposes of increasing a company's Eye Awareness (see page 111 of *Rivendell*).

Elbereth Gilthoniel!

'A Elbereth Gilthoniel - o menel palan-diriel, - le nallon si di'nguruthos!'

The name of Elbereth, the Queen of the Stars, is revered by all the Eldar still dwelling in Middle-earth. You may call on her name in a moment of great need, asking the Kindler to bestow her grace upon you.

If you or one of your companions are Wounded or Miserable, you can invoke the name of Elbereth and spend 1 or more Hope points to add an equal number of Success dice to a coming roll. Additionally, each Elven hero (or

New Fellowship Phase Undertaking: Elven-smithing

The Sword of Elendil was forged anew by Elvish smiths...

A companion who is an Artificer of Eregion may retire to his smithy in the valley of Imladris to give himself unto the hammer and anvil to either enhance a weapon or to enchant it. To complete his work, an artificer must accumulate 6 Craftsmanship points, in one or more undertakings. To gain Craftsmanship points, during the same Fellowship phase the companion may make a Craft roll, spend Experience points or gain Shadow, or a combination of the three.

- Gain 1 Craftsmanship point on a successful Craft roll, 2 points on a great success, and 3 on an extraordinary result.
- Spending Experience, you gain 1 Craftsmanship point for each Experience point you choose to spend.
- Finally, you may acquire Craftsmanship points by gaining Shadow, at the cost 1 Shadow for each Craftsmanship point gained.

If the artisan doesn't succeed in accumulating 6 points in the same Fellowship phase, take note of the number of points gained so far, to resume the work at a later Fellowship phase (the companion will have to choose the Elven-smithy undertaking again). It is possible to improve an item for someone else. In this case, the companion who will receive the weapon will have to stay in Rivendell for the Fellowship phase and take part in the making of the artefact by renouncing to choose another undertaking. The artificer will still make the Craft roll, but it is the other companion who will eventually spend Experience or gain Shadow to complete the work.

Elf-friend) in your company gains 1 bonus Success die on their next die roll too.

Might of the Firstborn

...on his brow sat wisdom, and in his hand was strength.

By the power that is in them, Elf-lords can fight the most powerful among the servants of the Enemy...

Once per combat round, when an adversary spends 1 or more Hate points to activate a special ability, you may roll Valour against TN 10, plus the Attribute level of the adversary. On a successful roll, the effects of the special ability are cancelled, but the adversary does not spend the Hate points. If the roll was a great or extraordinary success, then the Hate points are cancelled too. If you fail the Valour roll, or you roll an (whether the roll failed or not), you lose 1 point of Hope and you cannot invoke this virtue again for the rest of the battle.

Skill of the Eldar

'...we put the thought of all that we love into all that we make.'

When at the height of their powers, Elves are capable of reaching levels of finesse unattainable by mortals.

When you roll a result on your Feat die using a Common skill, you are additionally considered to have rolled a special icon . As a consequence, your roll not only succeeds automatically, but is considered to have succeeded in a superior way (a normal success becomes a great success, and a great success becomes an extraordinary success.

When you complete an action with a result, something unusual has taken place, something that mortal onlookers can only attribute to 'Elf-magic'.

Cultural Rewards - High Elves of Rivendell

A High Elf adventurer winning renown can be rewarded for his deeds with gear of great worth, coming from the vault hidden under the House of Elrond, or from his private collection.

Lesser Ring

You have inherited a lesser ring, one of the many magic rings that the smiths of Eregion made as essays in their craft before it was fully developed. While certainly not comparable to the major works of those gifted craftsmen, this magic ring is a powerful and dangerous artefact, to be kept secret and safe. Choose one of your Attributes, among Body, Heart or Wits. As long as you wear your lesser ring you gain a bonus of +1 to the basic rating of the chosen Attribute (and therefore its Favoured attribute is also increased by +1). Additionally, you also gain 1 point of permanent Shadow.

Books and Maps of Forbidden Lore

Elrond has entrusted you with the access to many precious texts and ancient maps compiled by Elvish scribes and long-dead scholars of the Dúnedain concerning the Shadow and its effects on the land.

Thanks to this forbidden knowledge, you have learned to recognise the presence of the Shadow in an area. You automatically recognise the threat of the Shadow when you are about to enter a Blighted place. When this happens, you may make a **Lore** roll: on a success, you identify the source of the blight, allowing you and you companions to lower the TN of any Corruption test by one level (TN -2).

Additionally, if you traversed at least a Blighted area during the last Adventuring phase and you succeeded in the associated **Lore** roll, you may spend a Fellowship phase compiling your experiences as your undertaking, to gain 1 Experience point.

Spear of the Last Alliance (great spear)

Thousands of spears were forged in the smithies of Imladris to arm the hosts of Gil-galad, and their long staves of ash were capped by a long spike at the other end.

When you roll a great or extraordinary success on an Attack roll using a Spear of the Last Alliance, you may spend 1 point of Hope to make a second Attack roll against a different opponent.

- Rangers of the North -

"...in the wild lands beyond Bree there were mysterious wanderers. The Bree-folk called them Rangers, and knew nothing of their origin."

When the Realm of Arnor ended long ago, the Dúnedain of the North did not abandon their struggle against the Enemy, but passed into the shadows and out of the history of most Men and Elves. Severely diminished in number, they became a secret people, wandering in disguise among crumbling walls and ruined towers. For almost a thousand years they dwelt in hidden places, in lonely woods and silent hills, but they never ceased to keep watch over the borders of their former kingdom as Rangers of the wild.

While the years have lengthened, the task of the Dúnedain has always been the same: to keep the folk of Eriador free from care and fear. They tirelessly patrol the region's many paths and roads and protect those who journey across them. They labour secretly, keeping to themselves while in the wild, and rarely giving their names to the travellers they save or to the countrymen whose farms they guard at night, when evil things come out from dark places.

There is little glory to be gained as Rangers of the North, as their valour cannot be rewarded with honour, and their deeds are seldom sung. The memory of their noble heritage is preserved in Rivendell, where their long strife against the Shadow is remembered and recorded. Since the days of their last King, the sons of the chieftains of the Dúnedain have been fostered in the house of Elrond, and it is there, in Imladris, that the heirlooms of their lost kingdom are treasured.

Description

The Rangers are the last descendants in the North of the Dúnedain, Kings among Men that once came to Middle-earth over the Sea out of Westernesse. When they do not disguise their features, they are tall and lordly, towering above most Men living in the North. They are often silent and grim of countenance, and look wise and mature beyond their years.

They generally wear comfortable but weather-beaten garments, favouring high leather boots and heavy cloaks of dark grey or green cloth, complete with ample hoods that can be cast over a worn helm.

Standard of Living

Little is known of the ways of the Dúnedain of the North, but what is certain is that the Rangers never wear or carry anything whose worth cannot be measured in a practical way. Their gear or garments are never considered precious for the gleam of stone or gold, but for their capability to endure long journeys and strenuous fights. This is why their culture's economy is ranked as *Martial*.

Ranger Adventurers

Ranger adventurers are seldom encountered, as a Man of the West rarely forsakes his duties - even when found journeying under foreign stars, a Ranger is almost certainly on an appointed mission. But younger Rangers may be encountered on occasion abroad, as the Dúnedain of the North see fit to engage in periods of errantry, and ride far afield disguised as merchants, sellswords, or just as simple wanderers, to extend their knowledge of the world. Among those few, it is not uncommon to encounter a young woman, for all females of that kin are fearless and strong.

Suggested Callings: *Scholar, Warden*. The Dúnedain of the North have chosen to protect those that are unwary of the true nature of the world, and to preserve the lore and wisdom of the North-kingdom - a duty no Ranger may forsake, even those who journey far from their lands.

Unusual Calling: *Treasure-hunter*. The Rangers of the North cherish their heritage and protect every testimony of their past as a precious relic. Woe to any who would dare to profane a tomb, or defile the stones of an Arnorian ruin.

Aragorn is not your Typical Ranger

Is Aragorn a typical example of a Dúnadan adventurer? Hardly so. While the Rangers certainly make for extraordinary adventurers, Aragorn is described by Gandalf as "the greatest traveller and huntsman of this age of the world" – a paragon of skill, wisdom and valour, a perfect example for all those who fight the encroaching darkness. Aragorn is not simply 'Strider', he is the chieftain of the Dúnedain of Arnor, bearer of the Sword That Was Broken, of the line of Valandil, Isildur's son, Elendil's lost son of Númenor...

What Aragorn Says...

- **Beornings:** "The followers of Beorn are a sparse lot, but they are fierce. Their prowess in matters of war cannot be doubted, and each Beorning can be counted as ten of lesser warriors. Yet I fear their recklessness may serve as a lure into dark ensnarements from which even their strength cannot escape."

- **Dwarves of the Lonely Mountain:** "As the forges of Erebor sing once more, Wilderland might find itself well-armed and armoured for the coming war, if the Dwarves of the Lonely Mountain do not fall prey to the fierce desires of their ancestors."

- **Elves of Mirkwood:** "For generations the subjects of the Elvenking have kept the corruption of Mirkwood at bay, yet they fail to see beyond their own walls. There is a threat in Mirkwood that cannot be ignored."

- **Hobbits of the Shire:** "The land of the Hobbits exemplifies all that we fight for. The simple wisdom and stout hearts of its inhabitants will be deemed a precious gift when the darkness falls."

- **Rangers of the North:** "Guarding the land of Eriador is not our only burden. We are the last remnant in the North of the great people, the Men of the West, and it is our duty to preserve intact their lineage and heritage, lest the world become a wilder place."

- **Woodmen of Wilderland:** "The Woodmen face daily the dangers of the Wild and they have a courage all their own, for they are not of noble lineage. They fought all their battles alone, and will probably continue to do so in the future. Yet, even if they knew about their lonesome fate, I doubt it would weaken their resolve or change their course."

Cultural Blessing

- Foresight of their Kindred -

"And I say to you: if you pass the doors of Moria, beware!"

The Rangers of the North still have in a measure the foresight their ancestors possessed in full before their race was diminished.

A Ranger of the North 'activates' the *Foresighted* Trait the first time that he successfully invokes it with the usual Trait rules (see the Traits section on page 92 of *The One Ring* for details). The activated Trait may then be invoked normally for the length of the current gaming session. When the session ends, the Trait won't be available for activation until the beginning of the following Adventuring phase.

All Ranger of the North characters add the *Foresighted* Trait in brackets on their character sheet.

New Trait: Foresighted

A sense of watchfulness, and of fear, may at times arise in you to warn you of a danger that has not yet come to pass. Even the wisest among your kin cannot always interpret these signs, and sometimes the reasons behind your sensations are never explained, as some of the things that you perceived do not actually come to be.

Starting Skill Scores

Common Skills

Copy the following skill ranks onto the character sheet and underline the favoured skill:

Awe	0	Inspire	0	Persuade	1
Athletics	1	<u>Travel</u>	2	Stealth	2
Awareness	3	Insight	1	Search	1
Explore	2	Healing	1	Hunting	2
Song	1	Courtesy	1	Riddle	0
Craft	0	Battle	1	Lore	2

Weapon Skills

Choose one of the following two Weapon skill sets, and record it on the character sheet:

1) (Swords) 2, Spear 1, Bow 1, Dagger 1
2) Long sword 2, (Bows) 1, Spear 1, Dagger 1

Specialities

Choose two Traits from:

Beast-lore, Fire-making, Herb-lore, Lore of Arnor, Smoking, Story-telling

New Trait: Lore of Arnor

Your folk have long preserved the lore of the kingdom of Arnor, passing on its wisdom from generation to generation. You are learned in the old lore of the Rangers and you know the crossing paths of Eriador like the back of your hand. *Lore of Arnor* bestows the benefits granted by both *Old Lore* and *Region Lore* (Eriador).

Backgrounds

1 - Herald

You wandered the far corners of the Northern Realm and travelled to places unknown to most of your kinsmen before you reached 14 years of age. Many miles and many weeks spent into the Wild have made you strong and fit. Your talents have been noticed, and you have become a carrier of tidings, at the service of the many Rangers spread across one of the most dangerous realms of the world. Your vigour assures that news of the Enemy's movements and purpose is known to all who serve the lost kingdom, no matter how scattered they might be.

Basic Attributes: Body 8, Heart 6, Wits 3
Favoured Skill: Athletics
Distinctive Features:
(choose two Traits from those listed)
Energetic, Fierce, Hardened, Keen-eyed, Lordly, Secretive, Tall, Wary.

2 - Counsellor

You have been taught that the servants of the Enemy thrive upon secrecy and deception. It is not enough to keep them at bay by strength of arms: for the plans of their masters to be laid bare, their honey-tongued lies must be exposed and their twisted words unravelled. Fortunately, you can see through their tricks quite well and you can recognise honesty in all Men, Elves or Dwarves. These qualities are as valuable to your kin as a shield in battle, and will guide you in your search for the truth.

Basic Attributes: Body 8, Heart 5, Wits 4
Favoured Skill: Riddle
Distinctive Features:
(choose two Traits from those listed)
Bold, Cunning, Forthright, Hardy, Honourable, Lordly, Quick of Hearing, Stern

3 - Dreamer of Portents

From a young age you had vivid dreams that stole away many nights of peaceful slumber. You spent your waking hours interrogating yourself about the meaning of those visions, and through years of study and meditation you have turned your dreams into a gift that allows you to gaze into the hearts of those you meet. It is said that your ancestors in Westernesse possessed similar talents, and you believe you are the bearer of their legacy.

Basic Attributes: Body 7, Heart 7, Wits 3
Favoured Skill: Insight
Distinctive Features:
(choose two Traits from those listed)
Eager, Generous, Grim, Just, Lordly, Steadfast, True-hearted, Wary

4 - Keeper of Earth and Spirit

Though the simple folk of the North speak in harsh whispers when you draw near, they also turn to you in times of woe when a blight has set itself upon their lands, for you have hands of healing and have cultivated gifts of renewal. Clad in mud-stained boots and carrying pouches filled with sweet-smelling leaves and herbs, your presence brings relief to all who have been injured, both in body and spirit. Still, you spend long seasons in the Wild and are often regarded as a savage figure to be feared unless at the utmost end of need.

Basic Attributes: Body 7, Heart 6, Wits 4
Favoured Skill: Healing
Distinctive Features:
(choose two Traits from those listed)
Bold, Eager, Gruff, Hardened, Lordly, Secretive, Stern, Tall

5 - Solitary Vagabond

You have wandered long in the ruins and shadows of the Northern Kingdom. Whether beneath the burial mounds of Cardolan or amongst the ivy-choked ruins of Fornost,

you have gazed upon the faded glory of your ancestors' halls and wept at the faded realm before you. By your sword, shadows are driven from these dark holds and in those rare moments of victory relics of kings past have been brought back to their rightful place among your people.

Basic Attributes: Body 7, Heart 5, Wits 5
Favoured Skill: Explore
Distinctive Features:
(choose two Traits from those listed)
Cunning, Energetic, Fierce, Grim, Honourable, Keen-eyed, Lordly, Steadfast

6 - Kingly Voice

Though the blood of Númenor has thinned in the waning years of the Third Age, many among the Dúnedain of the North still reveal the legacy of the Sea-Kings in their unexpected grace and hidden majesty. In spite of your road-worn garb and often harsh demeanour, the vestiges of that lost nobility emerges fully in your voice and words.

You have turned this ancient gift into a beacon of hope in dark times; you are confident that inspiration can stir both your kin and the free folk of the North to stand strong in the face of evil.

Basic Attributes: Body 6, Heart 6, Wits 5
Favoured Skill: Inspire
Distinctive Features:
(choose two Traits from those listed)
Forthright, Generous, Gruff, Hardy, Just, Lordly, Quick of Hearing, True-hearted

Rangers of the North Names

The Rangers of the North retain the tradition of the Dúnedain to name their sons and daughters using the Sindarin tongue.

Male Names: Adrahil, Amlaith, Arvegil, Baranor, Belecthor, Bergil, Celepharn, Cirion, Damrod, Dírhael, Duinhir, Egalmoth, Eradan, Findemir, Forlong, Golasdan, Hallas, Hirluin, Ingold, Iorlas, Malvegil, Ohtar, Orodreth, Tarannon, Targon.

Female Names: Anwen, Arbereth, Berúthiel, Baraniel, Calanril, Celenneth, Elnîth, Eraniel, Finduilas, Gilraen, Gilraeth, Gloredhel, Idril, Ioreth, Ivorwen, Lôrwend, Lothíriel, Luindîs, Meneloth, Moriel, Morwen, Narieth, Narniel, Orothêl, Tarandîs.

Adventuring Age: 18-60

Rangers are generally sent out into the Wild at the age of twenty, when they begin their customary period of errantry, but may begin to go on adventures even at a younger age. They retain their strength of body and will longer than most Men, but usually cease to travel far from Eriador when they reach their fifties.

Previous Experience

Players creating a Ranger of the North receive 14 points to define the previous experiences of their character (instead of the usual 10). The costs of raising each skill are the usual ones for all other Heroic Cultures, as summarised on page 10.

Cultural Virtues - Rangers of the North

The Rangers are what remains in the North of the great people that came to Middle-earth out of Westernesse, the Númenóreans. Their nobility of blood is exemplified by their many talents, even if their number has dwindled and their struggle has destined them to a life of secrecy.

Dauntless Guardians

'...when dark things come from houseless hills, or creep from sunless woods, they fly from us.'

You have been raised in a land dotted with desolate ruins and burial mounds. You have heard the dead whisper with cold voices out of lonely barrows, while ghostly lights dance on haunted hills. There are few among mortal Men who know more about evil spirits or fear them less than you do...

When you first select this Virtue you learn how to *See the Unseen*. You may later reinforce your spirit with *Strength of Will* by spending 1 Experience point as your undertaking during a Fellowship phase. Finally, you reach the stature of a true *Wraith Bane* by spending another Experience point as a new undertaking during a later Fellowship phase.

See the Unseen

It is said that the Elven-wise can perceive shades and wraiths that are otherwise invisible to the eyes of Mortals. You have been taught to recognise the signs that betray the haunting of a restless spirit. You are automatically aware of the presence or proximity of ghosts, shades and wraiths of any kind. A successful roll of **Lore** yields additional information on the nature of the haunting.

Strength of Will

In moments of fear, your will can strengthen your heart, so that you can withstand the great terror awakened in all Mortals by the denizens of the Unseen world. When an undead creature forces you to make a Corruption or Fear test, if you invoke an Attribute bonus it is based off your favoured Heart score. If you pass your own test with a great success, you may let another companion who failed his own roll to pass the test instead, or two companions on an extraordinary success.

Wraith Bane

In long centuries of secret strife, the things that hide among the ruins of Arnor have learnt to fear the dour-handed Dúnedain. When you hit an undead monster that can be wounded by your attacks with a Piercing Blow, the creature rolls one less die on its Protection test (to a minimum of 1 die).

Endurance of the Ranger

'Hardy is the race of Elendil!'

They say that a Ranger with a clear trail to follow can never be weary. You hope the saying will prove true, as it will be your fate to often travel in haste, to seek distant lands on urgent errands, or to relentlessly hunt your enemies. If the total Encumbrance of the gear you are carrying is equal to or less than 14 you gain the following benefits: your maximum Endurance score is considered to be 3 points higher, and every time you obtain a great success on a Fatigue test you may let another companion who failed his own roll to pass the test instead, or two companions on an extraordinary success.

Royalty Revealed

Aragorn threw back his cloak. The elven-sheath glittered as he grasped it, and the bright blade of Andúril shone like a sudden flame as he swept it out. 'Elendil!' he cried.

The Rangers of the North belong to a bloodline of Kings, but they have learnt to hide from their enemies in the twilight years of their kingdom. Should you choose to reveal your heritage, your noble bearing will cause your enemies to pause, and your allies to cast away their doubts.

You may reveal yourself in battle, by shouting an ancestral battle-cry or unsheathing a weapon of high lineage, for example, or by showing a device or coat-of-arms during an encounter with someone.

In battle, when you fight in a Forward stance you may attempt the *Intimidate Foe* combat task in addition to your attack roll (instead of forfeiting your action for the turn), but from that point on all your foes gain the Hatred (Dúnedain) special ability and will attack you when given the opportunity.

During an encounter, you may upgrade the quality of one successful roll by one level, turning a success into a great success, or a great success into an extraordinary one.

Rumour of the Earth

'Where sight fails the earth may bring us rumour...'

Stretching yourself upon the ground with your ear pressed against the turf you can decipher the sounds of the earth. You can hear it groan when the Enemy treads upon it, or echo the distant gallop of horses, or sing in tune with the rushing of tumbling waters.

Once a day, you may make a **Hunting** roll: on a success, the Loremaster must give you a useful piece of information about a quarry you are pursuing or a place you are seeking; the higher the quality of the success, the more information you obtain. Additionally, if the **Hunting** roll was successful, you may spend 1 point of Hope: every roll you make until the next sunrise using a movement, perception or survival skill benefits from a free Attribute bonus.

Ways of the Wild

'...yet still some go wandering, sons of forgotten kings walking in loneliness, guarding from evil things folk that are heedless.'

The Rangers of the North roam ceaselessly, hunting for wicked things and guarding all frontiers. For you the

Wild has become as familiar as the road that leads home is familiar to Hobbits, and when forced to fight you can always find the best place to stand your ground and await your enemies...

When fighting in the wilderness, you receive one free Combat advantage bonus die. When on a journey, if you are the Guide of the company you are considered to be assuming all vacant travelling roles (you are considered to 'fill in' as the company's Huntsman, Scout and Look-out man at the same time, if no other companion is already covering that role).

Cultural Rewards - Rangers of the North

Lord Elrond of Rivendell has made sure that wisdom is not neglected among the heirs of Elendil the Fair, but a valiant man is given great praise and reward by his peers in the North Kingdom, as theirs is a world at war.

Heirloom of Lost Arnor

You have been entrusted with the keeping of an ancient relic, an artefact going back to the days when a King ruled the land.

When you choose this Reward, use the tables on pages 94-95 of the *Rivendell* supplement to create a Wondrous Artefact possessing one Blessing. You should create an interesting story and description for the object, possibly with the help of the Loremaster. The item is generally of Mannish craftsmanship, but might even be of Elven or Dwarven make.

In addition to the blessing possessed by the relic itself, you are recognised by your kin as its bearer, and as such you enjoy a +2 bonus to Standing.

The Star of the Dúnedain

Rangers have opened uncounted paths in the Wild, and have created many refuges and encampments. But the need for secrecy is so vital for their survival that it is a command of their chieftains that no one may be revealed the whereabouts of these places, nor taught to decipher the signs and runes leading to them, before they have earned their place among their veterans. You have been recognised this honour, and you are now entitled to wear a silver brooch shaped like a rayed star upon your left shoulder. Raise your Standing score by 1. Moreover, while you are within the ancient boundaries of the realm of Arnor, you may make an **Explore** roll to find your way to one of these refuges. The quality of the success determines the distance to the nearest safe place: on a success, the refuge is within three days of march, on a great success within two days, on an extraordinary success the refuge can be reached within a few hours.

The refuges of the Rangers are always safe places, but their nature varies wildly: a refuge may be nothing more than a dry clearing on a hilltop, a shepherd's hut, a natural cave hidden by a waterfall, or the ruins of a hill-fort. Companions repairing there may find shelter, supplies of firewood, stores of dried food, medicinal herbs, and, if the place is inhabited, the possibility of exchanging tidings with other Rangers, or receiving or sending out messages. Resting in a Ranger's refuge allows each companion to recover 1 Fatigue even when travelling (only 1 point, regardless of the length of the stay).

Númenórean Arrows

For many long centuries, the "Men of the Sea" sent cohorts of archers to deluge their enemies under a rain of steel. Their long, black-feathered arrows can still be discovered inside burial mounds, or among the tall grass of Eriador, where long-forgotten battles were fought.

You start each Adventuring phase with a number of Númenórean Arrows equal to your Valour. When you attack using a bow, you may declare that you are using one of them: if you hit your adversary, he will lose an additional number of Endurance points equal to your Valour; moreover, he will miss his next attack, unless he spends a point of Hate.

At the end of the battle you can recover your used arrows (if the circumstances allow it), unless you failed an attack roll with an : in that case, the used arrow was lost or broken and cannot be recovered.

part two
new rules

new calling and - taking courage -

New Calling: Leader

'He stood up, and seemed suddenly to grow taller. In his eyes gleamed a light, keen and commanding.'

The Wise know that advice is a dangerous gift, as all courses may run ill. Worse is the case of a leader of men, as when his actions go amiss, many suffer as a consequence. But when the world is on the brink of ruin, it is the duty of all men of worth to rise and take the lead, whatever the risk of making the wrong choices. You have decided to put your judgement to the service of others, to guide them in this dark hour. But you don't want others to heed your commands out of fear or obedience – you want them to follow you because they trust in your counsel.

Favoured Skill Groups: Personality, Vocation
Trait: Leadership
Shadow Weakness: Lure of Power

New Trait – Leadership

You possess the capability to win the trust of others and push them to action. When under pressure, other men naturally turn to you for guidance, as ducklings follow their mother, or wolf pups heed their father.

Taking Courage

In Middle-earth it's common for veteran adventurers to lead bands of less-experienced companions. The veterans inspire courage and confidence, which often leads their companions to unexpected heroism of their own. This optional set of rules represent this in the game.

At the beginning of each game session, check which hero has the highest total Experience points score among all companions. Each companion who has fewer Experience points than that hero gains a point of Courage for every full 10 total Experience points' difference. A player-hero can earn no more Courage points than his basic Heart rating.

For example, Gismund, marshal of the Dale-lands, has 69 Experience points in total. His young companion Ecgalf has only 3 Experience points and a basic Heart score of 4. Ecgalf gains 4 points of Courage at the start of the game session.

Courage points may be spent in several ways:

- When about to spend 1 point of Hope, you may spend 1 point of Courage instead.
- At the end of a game session, spend 1 point (and 1 point only) of Courage to gain 1 Experience point.
- At the end of a game session, spend 1 point (and 1 point only) of Courage to gain 2 Advancement points.

Any Courage points left at the end of a session are lost (they cannot be saved for the following session).

Additional - Combat Rules -

And so at length Éomer and Aragorn met in the midst of the battle, and they leaned on their swords and looked on one another and were glad.

The rules for combat for *The One Ring* aim to capture the tension and drama of a fight as narrated in the stories, and at the same time offer exciting gameplay options.

This section presents a set of new game mechanics, created to supplement and expand the chapter on Combat, found on page 166 of *The One Ring Roleplaying Game*. Here are included new rules on the adoption of combat roles, new combat tasks, and additional rules for called shots.

Combat Roles

The true test of a company's mettle comes when a small band of heroes is surrounded by many enemies. It is at that moment that a company of veteran adventurers can demonstrate that fellowship means more to them than just friendship and closeness.

When a company of heroes is attacked, the player-heroes can choose to adopt a number of combat roles, representing their capacity to fight as a tight-knit formation.

- At the start of a fight at close quarters, the players may spend 1 Fellowship point to assign up to three special combat roles to members of the company, choosing between a Captain, a Champion, and a Ward. This choice must be done on the first round of a combat, before stances are selected.

Each role grants a number of advantages to the companion assuming it, from restricting the Loremaster to a set of specific engagement rules, to giving the heroes access to new and powerful manoeuvres.

While all roles prove more effective when associated to a specific close combat stance (see the Combat role advantages and the new Combat tasks on page 107, in particular), player-heroes are not limited by their choice of role and are free to choose any stance at the start of a round.

Captain

The captain of a company stands out in the confusion of a battle, as they must lead their warriors as they face the enemy. This makes the Captain the favourite target of archers and other creatures able to attack from a distance, wishing to see the leader of their enemies slain.

Champion

By making a display of personal prowess, the companion fighting as the Champion attracts the attention of the most powerful foes among the adversaries, in an attempt to vanquish them singlehandedly.

Ward

If among the companions there is someone whose life the heroes want to safeguard the most, a player may choose this role. At the onset of a fight, the companions look out for their Ward, manoeuvring to let only the weakest opponents engage the protected hero.

"Death take us all!"

Being able to profit from their mutual support brings to the companions many advantages, but it has its downside, should misfortune strike those who dare defy danger.

If a companion covering a combat role is Wounded or rendered Unconscious, all the other members of the company gain 1 point of Shadow, or 3 points if the hero is killed. This Shadow gain is in addition to any penalty due to the Fellowship focus rules.

Special Rules for Engagement

The following special rules apply only if the company is taking part in a fight against enemies outnumbering the company. If sides are equally matched, or there are more heroes than enemies, the normal rules for engagement apply instead.

Normally, at the start of a first round of combat fought at close quarters against more enemies than heroes, the Loremaster must proceed to pair each companion with a creature, choosing then to assign any remaining enemies to an already engaged companion, or to have them stand back, possibly to attack using a ranged weapon.

Should the players choose to adopt any combat role, the Loremaster must additionally abide by the following indications. To engage the companions, the Loremaster must follow the 3 steps below in order:

1. Engage the Champion
The Loremaster must engage the Champion of a company using an opponent with the highest Attribute level among the available attackers.

2. Engage the Ward
The Loremaster must engage the Ward of the company using an opponent with the lowest Attribute level among the available attackers.

3. Engage the Captain and all companions with no role
The Loremaster now pairs all remaining heroes with one creature, including the Captain, as they see fit.

When all companions have been engaged by one adversary, the Loremaster must assign the remaining creatures to either engage heroes who are already engaged, or to perform ranged attacks.

- If the Loremaster chooses to engage any hero with multiple opponents, they should try to conform to the indications above, again assigning the most powerful foes to the Champion, and the weakest to the Ward, avoiding assigning multiple opponents to the Ward, where possible.
- If creatures are assigned to attack using ranged weapons, then half or more of them must target the Captain of the company.

For example, a group of adventurers led by the Ranger Fareth has been caught by an Orc patrol that was seeking them among the foothills of the Misty Mountains. Fareth's company includes the valiant Rohirrim, Herubrand, the stout Man of Bree, Rowlie Pickthorn, and the Hobbit scholar, Tanta Twofoot. Tanta was gravely wounded in an earlier fight and is still quite weak. The Orcs are led by a huge chieftain with iron-capped fangs. The Orc-Chieftain's patrol includes himself (Attribute Level 5), two Orc Guards (4), three Orc Soldiers (3), and three Goblin Archers (2).

The company is outnumbered by slightly more than two to one. After the result of opening volleys have been determined (Herubrand's beloved steed, Caerthion, is stabled at a croft far from the mountains, so no charge for the Eorlingas), but before combat stances have been declared, the players decided to spend 1 Fellowship point to choose combat roles for the fight. They swiftly decide that Fareth will act as ***Champion****, Herubrand will act as* ***Captain****, and the already wounded Tanta will become the* ***Ward****.*

Due to their combat roles, the Loremaster must assign the Orc-Chieftain to Fareth, and at least one of the Goblin Archers has to draw their Jagged knife and slip forward to try to stab Tanta. (Maybe he's from Mount Gram?) The Loremaster ends up also sending an Orc Guard at Fareth, an Orc Guard and a Orc Soldier at Herubrand, and two Orc Soldiers at Rowlie Pickthorn. At least one of the two un-engaged Goblin Archers ***must*** *shoot at Herubrand, so the Loremaster decides the other does as well.*

Fareth lightly twirls her gleaming long sword, while offering the chieftain a grim smile. "Come and die, Orc." Herubrand strikes his sword thrice against his shield, drawing the attention of the archers as he steps in front of Tanta, Rowlie at his side. The Hobbit pulls forth a short sword and readies herself...

Combat Role Advantages

In addition to the special engagement rules, each combat role grants a companion a distinctive bonus, generally involving the use of the bonus Success dice granted by Combat Advantages (see pages 151 and 179 of *The One Ring Roleplaying Game*):

- If the Captain attempts the *Rally Comrades* combat task and succeeds, the player may spend and roll one Combat Advantage die to add the result to the number of Endurance points recovered by the companions.

- If the Champion attempts the *Intimidate Foe* combat task and succeeds, the player may spend and roll a

Combat Advantage die; additionally the Champion does bonus damage on any successful strike equal to the result plus the total Hate points his intimidation cost the enemy. The bonus lasts a number of rounds equal to the hero's Valour rating.

- If the Ward is fighting in an open or defensive stance, the player may spend a Combat Advantage die to carry out an attack AND perform a significant action at the same time (normally, a hero would be allowed to attack OR perform a significant action). A significant action performed in combat is anything requiring a skill roll, like breaking down a door, freeing a tied captive, carry a wounded friend to safety, and so on, but does not include combat tasks.

New Combat Tasks

"Follow what may, great deeds are not lessened in worth," said Legolas.

The tasks described below supplement those found on page 178 of *The One Ring Roleplaying Game* (italicised in the table at the bottom of the page), offering a total of eight new combat actions. As before, these tasks require a hero to be fighting in a specific stance, and often require a die roll (difficulties are set at TN 14, unless otherwise specified).

Forward Stance: Challenge Adversary

Then Théoden was aware of him, and would not wait for his onset, but crying to Snowmane he charged headlong to greet him.

A companion may choose to single out a foe for the fullness of his ferocity, fighting recklessly in an attempt to bring that enemy down.

The hero must name one adversary they are engaged with in close combat at the beginning of a round, after choosing a forward stance. For the length of the fight, the challenging hero rolls the Feat die twice, keeping the best result, when making close combat attack rolls against the challenged creature. The challenged foe enjoys the same advantage against the challenging hero.

Tasks in Combat (Expanded):

Combat task	Stance	Declared...	Requirement	Other
Intimidate Foe	forward	Hero's turn	**Awe** or **Battle** roll	Forfeit attack
Challenge Adversary	forward	Beginning of round	Choose one foe	-
Two-weapon Attack	forward	Hero's turn	Use 2 Weapon skills	-
Rally Comrades	open	Hero's turn	**Inspire** or **Song** roll	Forfeit attack
Enhearten Comrades	open	Hero's turn	**Inspire** or **Song** roll	Forfeit attack
Sudden Attack	open	Hero's turn	Unengaged, **Stealth** roll	-
Protect Companion	defensive	After choosing stance	Spend 1 **Hope**	-
Full Defence	defensive	Hero's turn	Shield, or 2 weapons	Forfeit attack
Stand Ground	defensive	Hero's turn	2h-weapons, spend 1 **Hope**	-
Prepare Shot	rearward	Hero's turn	-	Forfeit attack
Harry Foes	rearward	Hero's turn	Bows. Foes in open or forward	-
Seek a Mark	rearward	Ranged weapon	**Awareness** or **Battle** roll	Forfeit attack
Escape Combat	rearward	Beginning of round	-	Forfeit attack
Escape Combat	close combat	Hero's turn	**Athletics** roll	Forfeit attack

Forward Stance: Two-weapon Attack

...with a great sweep Boromir hewed the head off another.

At the start of a round, heroes wielding a close combat, one-handed weapon in each hand may declare that they will attack using both weapons. One hand must wield a primary weapon making use of the highest close combat weapon skill of the hero, while the off-hand must hold a secondary weapon making use of his second-best close combat weapon skill. If two skills are tied, the player chooses which weapon is the primary one and which one is the secondary.

A first attack is made rolling the primary weapon skill and is resolved normally. If the attack is successful, it is followed immediately by another attack using the secondary weapon skill. This roll is also resolved normally, and must target the same adversary hit by the first attack. A Two-weapon Attack does not allow a companion to attempt a Called Shot. Moreover, for the length of the round, the TN to hit the hero is reduced by an amount equal to the sum of the Encumbrance scores of the two weapons they wield.

Open Stance: Enhearten Comrades

'Come!' said Aragorn. 'This is the hour when we draw swords together!'

A variant of Rally Comrades, this task enables a companion to rouse their companions when the fight is wearing them out.

When it is his turn to take action, a hero may forego the chance to make an attack roll and make an **Inspire** or **Song** roll instead.

If the roll is successful, all fighting companions who are not Wounded ignore the effects of being Weary for a number of rounds based on the quality of the success:

Ordinary success: 2 rounds
Great success: 3 rounds
Extraordinary success: 4 rounds, or a number of rounds equal to the enheartening hero's Valour score, whichever is higher.

Unengaged Heroes

During a combat round, it may happen that a hero who was previously engaged in close combat finds themself unengaged when their turn to act comes. For example, their main adversary has been killed by another companion's attack, or the enemy was forced to flee by a successful Intimidate Foe roll. When this happens, the hero is free to choose another adversary to attack in close combat from among the available foes (engaged or unengaged) , keeping in mind the rules for the maximum number of heroes that can engage any one foe (*see The One Ring Roleplaying Game*, page 174).

Open Stance: Sudden Attack

But even as the orc flung down the truncheon and swept out his scimitar, Andúril came down upon his helm.

In place of their normal attack action, companions who are unengaged at the start of their turn may attempt a Sudden Attack against a foe currently engaged with another companion. The companion must first succeed at a **Stealth** roll; the TN is equal to 10 plus the highest Attribute level among all enemies present.

On a success, the companion engages the enemy and attacks normally, adding to the roll a number of bonus Success dice based on the result of the **Stealth** roll:

Ordinary success: 1 bonus Success die
Great success: 2 bonus Success dice
Extraordinary success: 3 bonus Success dice

On a failure, the opportunity for attack is lost and the round of the companion is over.

Defensive Stance: Full Defence

A sword was in her hand, and she raised her shield against the horror of her enemy's eyes.

A companion carrying a shield, or fighting with a one-handed, close combat weapon in each hand, may choose to devote their attention fully to their own defence, for example when engaged by multiple powerful enemies, or when attacked by a particularly deadly creature.

A hero fighting in Full Defence forfeits their chance to attack, in favour of raising their Parry rating by an amount equal to the Encumbrance rating of the carried shield, or of the weapon with the highest Encumbrance score among the two they are wielding. If the Encumbrance rating was modified by a Quality, use the original Encumbrance rating of a weapon or shield type.

Defensive Stance: Stand Ground

...Gimli stood with his stout legs apart, wielding his dwarf-axe.

Heroes wielding a two-handed weapon may profit from the superior reach of their war gear to keep multiple adversaries at bay.

When it is their turn to take action, heroes choosing to Stand Ground spend 1 point of Hope: until it is again their turn to take action, all close combat attacks targeting them roll the Feat die twice and keep the worse result.

Rearward Stance: Harry Foes

The bow of Legolas was singing.

Heroes fighting in a rearward stance and using bows (any type) may choose to pepper their enemies with arrows, not looking for carefully aimed shots, but rather to hinder their foes and make them easier targets. Only enemies engaged with companions in a forward or open stance may be targeted by this task.

The harrying player must succeed in a ranged attack roll using a bow of any type, against a difficulty equal to TN 12, plus the highest Parry rating among the potential targets. On a successful roll, a number of enemies based on the quality of the success are successfully hindered by the rain of arrows.

Ordinary success: 2 foes
Great success: 3 foes
Extraordinary success: 4 foes

Ranged attacks aimed to harry foes do not inflict damage, but reduce the difficulty to hit the affected enemies for the next close combat attack aimed at them: the TN to hit them is considered to be equal to their Parry rating (the engaged companion's stance TN is not taken into account).

Rearward Stance: Seek a Mark

'Now I have him at the arrow-point,' said Anborn.

A hero fighting in a rearward stance may forego their chance to make an attack to make an **Awareness** or **Battle** roll to observe the enemies, looking for the best opportunity to catch them when they lower their guard. On a successful roll, any foe attacked by the hero with a ranged weapon is considered to be severely hindered (TN -4) against those attacks, for a number of rounds based on the quality of the success produced by the roll:

Ordinary success: 2 rounds
Great success: 3 rounds
Extraordinary success: 4 rounds

Expanded Called Shots

The rules for combat of *The One Ring* detail how daring companions may attempt called shots—attack rolls that are harder to accomplish, but that yield greater beneficial effects when successful, based on the weapon used in the attack. The following optional effects expand the available choices, also introducing called shots not depending on the weapon type.

Heroes attempting any one of the manoeuvres described below must declare their choice before the dice are rolled. All rolls are resolved using the usual rules for called shots found on page 178 of *The One Ring Roleplaying Game*.

Called Shots: a Summary

Heroes wishing to perform a called shot must declare it before the dice are rolled. Then, the roll result must match or beat the TN set for the attack AND produce at least one ᚦ icon (a great or extraordinary success); otherwise, the attack misses altogether.

If the roll result didn't match or beat the TN AND the player got a ᛟ icon, the companion fumbled, exposing himself: the next time he is attacked, the difficulty to hit the hero will be equal to the basic combat TN of his stance.

Note that achieving a called shot means that the attack roll also resulted in a great or extraordinary success, inflicting a superior loss of Endurance (see Endurance Loss, page 176 of *The One Ring Roleplaying Game*).

Called Shots for Adversaries

Under the normal rules, adversaries automatically attempt a called shot using the weapon they are currently using, whenever a companion attacking them fails his attack roll and obtains a ᛟ result. When this happens, the Loremaster is free to use the new called shots for creatures attacking the companions, when applicable. Monsters and wild creatures not wielding weapons may adopt the Savage Blow called shot.

Called Shots (Expanded):

Called Shot	Weapon type
Break Armour	Axes, Mattock
Break Shield	Axes, mattock
Pierce	Bows, spears
Disarm	Swords
Holding Back	Close combat
Maiming Strike	Swords
Pummelling Attack	Close combat
Rain of Arrows	Bow
Savage Blow	Close combat
Swift Strokes	Close combat

Break Armour (Axes, Mattock)

A character armed with an axe of any type or mattock may damage the armour of an enemy with a well-aimed swing, be it the black chainmail of Orcs or the close-fitting scales of a Troll's hide.

If the called shot is successful, the target rolls one Success die less on his Protection tests for the length of the fight. (This called shot cannot affect the same adversary more than once).

Holding Back

Companions fighting in close combat and not wishing to wound or kill their opponents can hold back and refrain from administering potentially deadly blows with their weapons.

If the called shot attempt is successful, an adversary hit by a Piercing Blow is considered to automatically pass the Protection test. (Any Endurance loss is administered normally, but the blow cannot Wound the target).

Maiming Strike (Swords)

A hero wielding a sword of any type may aim to reduce the fighting capability of a foe, slashing at its arms, hands, or even jaws. The hero must choose a weapon skill or attack form to target.

If the called shot attempt is successful, the adversary rolls one Success die less on each roll made using the targeted

ability for the rest of the fight. (This called shot cannot affect the same ability more than once).

Pummelling Attack

Heroes fighting in any close combat stance may attempt a Pummelling Attack to violently throw an opponent off-balance.

If the called shot attempt is successful, the consequences of the attack are resolved normally and the adversary is additionally considered severely hindered in attack until the end of the following round (TN +4 to any attack rolls the adversary makes).

If the unbalanced foe is the only adversary facing the companion, then the hero may escape combat without the need for a roll of **Athletics** (see Escape Combat, page 180 of *The One Ring Roleplaying Game*).

A hero may try a Pummelling Attack only against creatures not greater than human-sized, unless mounted on a horse; heroes on horseback may also pummel a creature the size of a Troll, or greater (foes possessing the Great Size special ability, for example).

Rain of Arrows (Bow)

A companion who is fighting in a rearward stance and using a bow (not a Great bow) may attempt a Rain of Arrows called shot to hit any two foes on the battlefield. The targets must be chosen and declared before the dice roll is made.

The attack roll result is compared first to the TN of the first target. If the called shot is successful, the target receives damage normally, and the roll result is compared against the TN of the second target. If the roll result matches or beats the TN again, then the second opponent is hit too and suffers damage normally. If the attack fails against the first target, it also fails against the second target.

Savage Blow

A hero fighting in a close combat stance may attempt a Savage Blow called shot to inflict greater harm on the target.

If the called shot attempt is successful, the player inflicts an additional loss of Endurance equal to the attacker's close combat Damage rating (their Attribute level for adversaries).

Swift Strokes

A companion who is fighting in a close combat stance and who is engaged by at least two opponents may attempt a Swift Strokes called shot to hit two foes. The targets of the attack must be declared before rolling the dice.

The attack roll result is compared first to the TN of the first target. If the called shot is successful, the target receives damage normally, and the roll result is compared against the TN of the second engaged adversary.

If the roll result matches or beats the TN again, then the second opponent is also hit and suffers damage normally. If the attack fails against the first target, it also fails against the second target.

Expanded - Masteries -

"It has four limbs and dives manwise; a pretty mastery of the craft it shows, too."

On page 103 of the rules for *The One Ring Roleplaying Game*, players can find a number of talents that adventurers of any culture can acquire when gaining a new Wisdom level. This chapter introduces an additional way to acquire Masteries in a campaign of *The One Ring*, and offers a number of new talents to choose from.

Training Masteries

Whenever companions gain a new Wisdom level, they receive a Virtue, choosing to add to their abilities a Mastery or a Cultural Virtue). Where Cultural Virtues represent peculiar abilities available only to members of a given culture, Masteries can be gained by any hero.

Using the rules presented here, players who have chosen Masteries can additionally spend Experience points to further develop their heroes, using the new *Exercise your Talent* Fellowship phase undertaking .

New Fellowship Phase Undertaking: Exercise your Talent

'You must settle its affairs yourselves; that is what you have been trained for.'

Companions spending a Year's End Fellowship phase at home can devote the cold season to train and exercise to expand their talents and reach truly heroic levels.

For each Mastery received through the acquisition of a new Wisdom level, a hero can choose this undertaking to gain a second Mastery, at the cost of 10 Experience points.

Mastery Dice

A number of new talents contained in this chapter make use of *Mastery dice*. A Mastery die is a regular Success die that is added to the number of dice a player is rolling when attempting a test or task. It is not necessary for a Mastery die to be of a different colour than the other dice used in the same roll, but their addition may bring the total of Success dice rolled beyond the normal limit of six dice.

- When making a die roll including one or more Mastery dice, the rolling player considers the results obtained and then adds up the values of a number of Success dice equal to the character's appropriate rating, ignoring the dice in excess.

*For example, Trotter acquired a Skill Mastery for his **Travel** ♦♦♦ ability. When making a roll using **Travel**, he now rolls the Feat die and four Success dice, keeping the three best results.*

The maximum number of Mastery dice that can be added to the same roll are based on the selected Mastery. Read the description of each talent carefully.

Expanded Masteries List

The Masteries described in this chapter can be chosen by heroes gaining a new Wisdom level, or choosing the *Exercise your Talent* Fellowship phase undertaking.

Each Mastery can be acquired more than once by the same character.

The list below includes the Masteries originally presented in *The One Ring Roleplaying Game* (italicised in the table) and adds a selection of new talents.

Confidence

Overcoming difficulties has hardened your spirit, and at the same time renewed your faith in a brighter future.

Raise your maximum Hope rating by 2 points. When you choose this mastery, raise your Hope score to its new maximum rating..

Corruption Mastery (source)

The actions of the Enemy bring despair to all in these days of Twilight. You have learned that a resolute heart is the best defence against them.

Add 1 Mastery die to all Corruption tests made to confront one source, choosing among traversing a Blighted Place, finding Tainted treasure, or being targeted by sorcery (any Corruption tests forced by a creature).

The same source of Corruption cannot be chosen twice.

Dour-handed

When you throw a weapon or bend your bow, your hand is steady and your aim is sure.

Raise your ranged Damage rating by 1.

Expertise

You have practised a skill until it has become as natural as breathing.

You can choose a new favoured skill (either a Common skill or a Weapon skill).

Fear Mastery

You have seen the threat of the Shadow take many forms, and confronted it. You survived so far, and the experience has made you stronger.

Add 1 Mastery die to all your Fear tests. Fear Mastery can be chosen more than once.

Fell-handed

You have learned to put all your strength into your blows in hand-to-hand battle.

Raise your close combat Damage rating by 1.

Gifted

Adventuring is honing your inborn talents.

Raise one of your favoured Attributes (see page 85 of *The One Ring Roleplaying Game*) by one.

Protection Mastery (armour type)
You have grown used to wearing your favoured armour to the point that you hardly feel impeded by it when you are fighting.

Add 1 Mastery die to all your Protection rolls made while wearing armour of a type, choosing between leather and mail armour. The same armour type cannot be chosen twice.

Resilience
Your determination and stamina have improved through hardship and toil.

Raise your maximum Endurance rating by 2 points. When you choose this Mastery, set your Endurance score again to its new maximum rating.

Skill Mastery (favoured skill)
Tireless application and dedication to your preferred craft is finally bearing its fruits.

Add 1 Mastery die to a favoured skill (Common or Weapon skill). The same skill cannot be chosen twice.

Masteries List (Expanded):

Mastery	Effect	Can be acquired...
Confidence	+2 to Maximum Hope	unlimited
Dour-handed	+1 to Ranged Damage	unlimited
Expertise	Add 1 favoured skill	unlimited
Fell-handed	+1 Close combat Damage	unlimited
Gifted	+1 to one Favoured Attribute	unlimited
Resilience	+2 to Maximum Endurance	unlimited
Corruption Mastery	Add 1 Mastery die to the Corruption tests provoked by a source	once per source
Fear Mastery	Add 1 Mastery die to all Fear tests	unlimited
Protection Mastery	Add 1 Mastery die to all Protection tests made while using armour of a type	once per armour type
Skill Mastery	Add 1 Mastery die to a favoured skill	once per skill

Part Three
Between Adventures

the - fellowship - phase

"Personally I am tired of the whole affair. I wish I was back in the West in my own home, where folk are more reasonable."

How a Fellowship Phase Works

A Fellowship phase is a session of play driven by the players' choices. While during the Adventuring phase, players usually react to the Loremaster's storytelling, during a Fellowship phase the players get to elaborate upon their characters' stories and ambitions. The Loremaster is the final judge regarding the interpretation of the rules, but is invited to sit back and follow what his players have to say about their characters.

A Fellowship phase marks the conclusion of the current Adventuring phase, and as such typically takes place at the end of a gaming session.

Structure

A Fellowship phase lasts from a week to one full season of game time, depending on the Loremaster's structuring of the game. At the beginning of a Fellowship phase, the players must choose whether the company retires somewhere to spend the phase as a group or if they temporarily disband and each hero returns home by himself.

Once they are set upon a decision, they start taking individual turns to tell the Loremaster and the other players what they are going to do and where they are going to do it.

In addition, players get to record the growth of their characters by spending their Experience points and Advancement points.

Fellowship Phase Structure:

Step	Description
Choose Destination	The company repairs to a Sanctuary, or disbands temporarily (companions return home).
Standing Upkeep	If away from home, companions must reduce their Standing by one point OR spend Treasure equal to their current Standing.
Spend Experience Points	Players buy Wisdom, Valour, or Weapon skill ranks.
Spend Advancement Points	Players buy Common skill ranks.
Choose Undertaking	Players choose an activity for their characters to perform (or possibly two activities, in the case of a longer stop).

Destination

The players are free to spend the phase at any Sanctuary they have already opened during the game, or at home. The Adventurer's Map found in any of the supplements for *The One Ring* (especially *Journeys & Maps*) comes in useful here, especially if the players have updated the information on it and kept track of their journeys.

The route bringing the company or each individual player-hero to his chosen destination is considered to take place 'behind the scenes' without Fatigue tests and consequences, unless the Loremaster or his players have a mind to play out the details.

Players should generally choose a place within a reasonable distance from the area where they were adventuring during the recent sessions of play, also taking into consideration how long the Fellowship phase is going to last and where and when they have agreed to meet up afterwards.

The Company Repairs to a Sanctuary

A number of locations are considered sanctuaries: special places particularly suited to support the needs of a company of adventurers, and inhabited by a host willing to welcome them. At the beginning of the game, only one place is considered a sanctuary. By default this is the town of Esgaroth on the Long Lake, but if the game has begun somewhere else the Loremaster should pick another suitable location. Access may be gained to other locations by visiting them and choosing the *Open New Sanctuary* undertaking (see pages 121-124).

Characters in a sanctuary dedicate their time to telling and listening to stories and to the exchange of adventuring experiences.

The Company Disbands Temporarily

When a company disbands temporarily, each player chooses the location to which his character repairs to.

Usually, heroes return home, as the player has decided that maybe the character needs to spend some time among his own folk, to refocus or meditate, or that he intends to develop his personal relationships at home.

When a hero intends to invest his earned Treasure, he needs to return home.

Standing Upkeep

Adventurers find friendship and allies in unlikely places, but are very quick to lose their respectability at home, unless some measure is taken to prevent that. When a companion passes a Year's End Fellowship phase away from home (see *The One Ring Roleplaying Game*, page 200), he must reduce his Standing rating by 1 point, unless he spends a number of Treasure points equal to his current Standing rating.

This upkeep cost represents what a hero does to ensure that his efforts in taking care of his own folk are widely recognised. Heroes with no Standing don't need to maintain it.

Activities

When players start relating their characters' actions, they should respect the time limit set by the duration of the phase and a geographical limit, defined by the place where their characters are supposed to be spending the phase.

Players are free to narrate in detail what their characters do, as long as they abstain from activities that require the introduction of new background information (like

exploring a location they have never visited before, making the acquaintance of personalities they haven't encountered yet, and so forth). In general, they should avoid doing things that are better suited to an Adventuring phase.

Considering these restrictions, when his turn comes, each player is allowed to develop his character by spending his Experience points and Advancement points (see Character Development below), and then he is entitled to choose one undertaking for his hero to pursue, or possibly two activities, in the case of a longer stop (see *Fellowship Phase Undertakings* on page 120).

Character Development

In *The One Ring*, characters earn Advancement points during play that will let them develop their Common skill scores, and gain Experience points at the end of every session, to spend them to improve their abilities or to acquire new ones.

Advancement Points

During the Adventuring phase, heroes can achieve extraordinary feats and grow in prowess as a result. In gaming terms, they may be granted a number of Advancement points.

Advancement points are used by players to develop their Common skill ratings during the Fellowship phase.

The rules for awarding Advancement points are detailed in *The One Ring Roleplaying Game*, on page 212, but these are the general principles:

- A player can be awarded 1 Advancement point when he uses a Common skill and succeeds.
- When this happens, the player records it on the character sheet by putting a 'check mark' on one of the circles to the right of the Skill group that the skill used belongs to.
- Since there are only 3 circles, player-heroes may earn up to a maximum of 3 points in each skill group in the course of an Adventuring phase.

When the Adventuring phase is over, all points are accounted for and the check marks are erased from the character sheet. The number of Advancement points received is kept track of on the back of the character sheet, in the appropriate box.

Experience Points

A hero's sense of accomplishment, his confidence and skill at arms and the hard-earned respect paid to him by his peers are represented by the award of Experience points.

These points allow players to buy Valour and Wisdom ranks, and to attain superior levels of proficiency in their chosen Weapon skills.

The rules for awarding Experience points are detailed in *The One Ring Roleplaying Game*, on page 212, but the general principles are here summarised:

- Players gain Experience points at the end of every gaming session they attend.
- They gain more points if they are considered to have progressed towards their company objective (see box).
- A number of bonus Experience points are awarded at the end of the Adventuring phase.

Players keep track of the number of Experience points they gain during play by updating their score on the character's sheet. To do so, they use the larger box; the smaller box, labelled Total, is used to record how many Experience points a player has received so far, including those he invested already in the development of his hero.

Spending Advancement Points

Players spend Advancement points to raise their Common skill ranks, using the costs in the table below. Players are not obliged to spend all their Advancement points, but may save them to acquire more expensive upgrades during a later Fellowship phase.

Players can also buy multiple ranks in the same Common skill, as long as they pay the cost of every new level individually. Any remaining Advancement points are kept track of using the appropriate space on the back of the character sheet.

The Advancement Points Cost table below indicates the cost for raising any Common skill. If the ability to be raised is a Favoured skill, then the player uses the costs listed in the second column to the right.

Advancement Points Costs:

New Level to Attain	Cost	Favoured Skill Cost
♦	4	3
♦♦	8	6
♦♦♦	12	9
♦♦♦♦	16	12
♦♦♦♦♦	20	15
♦♦♦♦♦♦	24	18

Spending Experience Points

Heroes may spend their accumulated Experience points to gain a new rank in either Wisdom or Valour, and to enhance their proficiency in their Weapon skills.

Players are not obliged to spend all the Experience points they have received at once, but may save them from session to session to acquire more expensive upgrades, or they may spend a portion of them to get a smaller upgrade and save the remaining points for later. Whatever their choice, players should pick their options wisely, as the choices they make when spending Experience points determine the growth of a player-hero.

Players keep track of how many Experience points they gain and how many they spent so far by updating the relevant boxes on their character sheets

Buying a new Valour or Wisdom Rank

No other characteristics express the stature and maturity of a player-hero better than Wisdom and Valour. If a player chooses to spend his hard-earned Experience points to advance in one of the two ratings, he should keep in mind how much gaining a new rank is going to influence his character's life, both from a gaming standpoint and a from a storytelling angle.

Heroes may buy a rank in Valour or Wisdom if they have enough points to attain the new rating: the last column of the Experience Points Cost table below indicates the cost in Experience for buying a new rank. The character also gains a new Reward or Virtue (see page 102).

During the same Fellowship phase a hero can buy a maximum of one rank in either Wisdom or Valour (not both). When a player-hero advances in either Wisdom or Valour, care should be taken to adjust the scores of all related abilities and features.

Buying Weapon and Cultural Weapon Skill Ranks

The only method for a player-hero to raise the proficiency of his Weapon skills is to spend Experience points. Players are free to raise their skills as they see fit, as long as they have enough points. Players can buy multiple ranks in the same Weapon skill, as long as they pay the cost of every new level.

The Experience Points Cost table below indicates the cost for raising any combat skill, whether an individual Weapon skill or a Cultural Weapon skill.

Experience Points Costs:

Valour and Wisdom Rank	Weapon Skill Level	Cost to Attain New Rank or Level
-	♦	2
2	♦♦	4
3	♦♦♦	6
4	♦♦♦♦	10
5	♦♦♦♦♦	16
6	♦♦♦♦♦♦	26

Improving a Weapon Skill from a Cultural Weapon Skill

It is possible to buy a level for an individual Weapon skill belonging to the category of a Cultural skill group the hero already possesses, starting from the proficiency level of the Cultural Weapon skill.

While there is no savings in buying a specific Weapon skill, players may choose to do this if planning to later make the new individual Weapon skill a favoured skill (as Cultural Weapon skills cannot be made into favoured skills).

- Fellowship - phase undertakings

"But over the mountains I am bound, by solemn undertaking to the Council."

During the Fellowship phase, a player may choose to undertake a task, typically choosing from the extensive list of undertakings compiled in this chapter.

Players should not feel bound by this list, however – they are invited to come up with new and exciting ways to spend a Fellowship phase. Often, players need look no further than the recently concluded Adventuring phase, as the story that was just completed might have provided several leads worth following, like a new friendship to consolidate or a new sanctuary to be granted access to. Any activity that could have a lasting impact on the character can be considered an undertaking.

Normally, a player is allowed to choose one single activity for his character to undertake. A longer Fellowship phase, like for example the one reserved for a year's end (see *The One Ring Roleplaying Game*, page 200) might allow for up to two undertakings instead. If the Loremaster agrees, in the case of a longer pause a player can choose up to two different Fellowship phase undertakings (the player cannot choose to repeat the same activity twice).

Here follow a series of tables listing the various undertakings that have been published in *The One Ring Roleplaying game* and in its supplements. Table 1 lists activities that are considered more common. Table 2 lists unusual activities tied to a specific individual and that can be chosen only if the companion is spending a Fellowship phase in the location where that personality currently resides. The third, fourth and fifth tables present undertakings tied to specific locations in a region, and may therefore only be chosen by companions spending their Fellowship phase there.

New Fellowship Phase Undertaking: Confer with Radagast the Brown

When a companion spends a Fellowship phase in Rhosgobel (or another location where he may be met), they may go and spend time with the Wizard, Radagast the Brown, who knows a great deal about the Wild.

A companion who has spent a Fellowship phase talking with Radagast may gain his next Lore or Explore level (player's choice) at half the cost in Advancement points.

Alternatively, they may instead spend time helping Radagast in his garden, acquiring either the Beast-lore or Herb-lore traits.

Table 1. Common Undertakings:

Undertaking	Where/Who	Effect	Reference
Drumming up Support	Anywhere	Raise Standing for sixth of normal Treasure cost, until end of following Year's End Fellowship phase.	DoM, pg. 40
Gain New Distinctive Feature/Speciality	Anywhere	Replace old Trait with a new one.	TOR, pg. 197
Go See a Lore-master	Anywhere*	Reveal a Wondrous Artefact's Blessings; or a Famous Weapon or Armour's Banes and the next hidden Quality.	Riv, pg. 21
Heal Corruption**	Anywhere	**Craft** or **Song** roll. On a success, reduce Shadow by 2, by 4 on a great success, by 6 on an extraordinary success. May make two rolls in a sanctuary.	TOR, pg. 198
Meet Patron	Anywhere	Gain counsel/aid from a patron (see pg. 125)	TOR, pg. 197
Name an Heir	Anywhere	Select an heir, gain 1 Hope. May only ever select this undertaking once.	pg. 138
Open New Sanctuary	Anywhere	All companions must select undertaking. Current location becomes a sanctuary.	TOR, pg. 199
Raise Standard of Living	Anywhere	Spend 1 Treasure per month to become Prosperous, 2 Treasure per month to become Rich.	TOR, pg. 198
Raise Standing	Home	Spend Treasure to increase Standing. See undertaking description for cost.	TOR, pg. 199
Receive Title	Anywhere	Standing now applies to another culture, and you are gifted with a house or land tract there. See undertaking for more information.	TOR, pg. 199
Search for Answers	Anywhere*	**Lore** roll to gain insight or information. See undertaking for more information.	DoM, pg. 33
Tend to Holding	Home	Roll Feat die twice and choose best result when resolving effects of a Holding. If you possess an appropriate speciality, gain an Advancement point.	DoM, pg. 9
There and Back Again	Home	Recover a third of starting Hope. Gain 1 permanent Shadow point.	Riv, pg. 22
Visit the Treasury of your Folk	Home	Trade an item in to raise Standing and activate Qualities on magical war gear. See undertaking for more information.	Riv, pg. 23
Write a Song	Anywhere	**Song** roll to add to company's list of songs. See undertaking for more information.	Riv, pg. 23

*See the description of the undertaking for restrictions.
**High Elves of Rivendell may not choose this undertaking.

Table 2. Individual Undertakings:

Undertaking	Where/Who	Effect	Reference
Confer with Gandalf the Grey	Anywhere*	Gain next **Lore** or **Travel** level at half cost in Advancement points. Or, acquire *Smoking* trait.	RotN, pg. 126
Confer with Saruman the White	Anywhere*	Gain next **Lore** level at half cost in Advancement points. Or, acquire *Shadow-lore* trait at cost of one permanent Shadow point.	DoM, pg. 50
Confer with Radagast the Brown	Anywhere*	Gain next **Lore** or **Explore** level at half cost in Advancement points. Or gain *Beast-lore* or *Herb-lore* trait.	AC, pg. 120
Elven-smithing	Rivendell/ Artificer	Enhance a weapon.	Riv, pg. 132
Study with the Lampmaker	Elf of Mirkwood only; Thranduil's Halls	Spend an Experience point to learn *Blazing Elf-lights*.	HotW, pg. 79

*See the description of the undertaking for restrictions.

Table 3. Eriador Undertakings:

Undertaking	Where/Who	Effect	Reference
Find Athelas	Rivendell or Rangers of the North	**Explore** roll (TN 18, TN 14 with *Herb-lore*). Success finds enough athelas to use once in next Adventuring phase, twice on great success, three times on extraordinary success. See undertaking for more information.	Riv, pg. 54
Honouring the Fallen	Rangers of the North	Gain 1 Hope, even if it takes you above maximum.	Riv, pg. 40
Open Rivendell as a Sanctuary	Rivendell	As *Open New Sanctuary*. Once open, only need make a **Travel** roll to find it again.	Riv, pg. 22
Researching Lore in the House of Elrond	Rivendell	**Lore** roll to gain insight or information. See undertaking for more information.	Riv, pg. 22
Return to Amon Dûn	Rangers of the North	*Heal Corruption* using **Travel**.	Riv, pg. 60
Watch upon Amon Sûl	Rangers of the North	During next Adventuring phase, if journeying through central Eriador reduce company's Fatigue test TN by -2.	Riv, pg. 57

Table 4. Wilderland Undertakings:

Undertaking	Where/Who	Effect	Reference
Befriend the Beasts	Beorn's House	Befriend a pony; befriend a hound; learn speech of beasts. See undertaking for more information.	HotW, pg. 42
Collect Marsh Herbs	Lake-town	Roll on table to gather herbs. See undertaking for more information.	LT, pg. 12
Compete on the Field of Heroes	Woodman of Wilderland	**Athletics**, **Hunting**, **Bows** or **Axe** roll. Success reduces cost of increasing Standing by 3, great success by 6, extraordinary success by 12.	HotW, pg. 50
Enter Wuduseld	Woodland Hall	Gain benefits of *Old-lore* for next Adventuring phase. If you already have *Old-lore*, gain two benefits from invocation.	HotW, pg. 98
Feast in the Great Clearing	Thranduil's Halls	Gain benefits of *Merry* for next Adventuring phase. If you already have *Merry*, gain two benefits from invocation.	HotW, pg. 79
Gather Firewood in the Elfwood	Beorn's House	Gain benefits of *Firemaking* for next Adventuring phase. If you already have *Firemaking*, gain two benefits from invocation.	HotW, pg. 31
Go Hunting with the Woodmen	Woodland Hall, Woodmen Town, Rhosgobel	**Hunting** roll to roll on table. See undertaking for more information.	HotW, pg. 91
Go to the Market-pool	Lake-town	Spend Treasure to acquire an item. See undertaking for more information.	LT, pg. 12
Guard the Old Ford	The Old Ford	Roll on table to keep ford safe. See undertaking for more information.	HotW, pg. 40
Hunting Grim Hawks	Mountain Hall	**Hunting** roll. On a success you are recognised as an *Éafolc-friend* for a year, or until trait invoked more than twice in Adventuring phase.	HotW, pg. 44
Open the Eyrie as a Sanctuary	The Eyrie	**Courtesy** roll. If all companions succeed, Eyrie is now a sanctuary.	HotW, pg. 36
Open the Halls of the Elvenking as a Sanctuary	Thranduil's Halls	As *Open New Sanctuary*. Dwarves and heroes with 3+ Shadow must pass a **Riddle** test to enter.	HotW, pg. 78
Open the Old Ford as a Sanctuary	The Old Ford	As *Open New Sanctuary*.	HotW, pg. 40
Patrol the Wild	Woodland Hall, Woodmen-town or Rhosgobel	Gain benefits of *Mirkwood-lore* for next Adventuring phase. If you already have *Mirkwood-lore*, gain two benefits from invocation.	DoM, pg. 58
Return to the Carrock	Beorning	*Heal Corruption* using **Travel**.	HotW, pg. 40
Taming the Steed of the Moon	Vales of Anduin	Attempt each year to tame the Steed, needing a total of 12 skill ranks in **Athletics**, **Awe**, **Inspire** and **Hunting**. Make a Valour or Wisdom roll to add successes to the total needed.	HotW, pg. 16
Visit the Kingstone	Rhosgobel	First time, recover 3 points of Hope. Subsequent times gain 1 Hope.	HotW, pg. 60

Visit the Market at Trader's Isle	Mountain Hall	Spend 1 Treasure to visit market and roll on table. See undertaking for more information.	HotW, pg. 46
Visit the Sentinel Oak	Thranduil's Halls	For next Adventuring phase, all **Travel** rolls in Woodland Realm, Mountains of Mirkwood or Heart of Mirkwood are TN -2.	HotW, pg. 79

Table 5. Rohan, Isengard and Fangorn Undertakings:

Undertaking	Where/Who	Effect	Reference
Climb the White Mountains	Aldburg, Edoras or Helm's Deep	**Athletics** roll to climb mountain and roll on table. See undertaking for more information.	Roh, pg. 44
Enter the Hornburg	Riders of Rohan	Fey Mood only causes Shadow gain on an .	Roh, pg. 48
Gain Favour in the Golden Hall	Edoras	**Song** roll. Success earns favour of Loremaster character of Standing 3 or 4, great success Standing 5, extraordinary success Standing 6. See undertaking for more information.	Roh, pg. 22
Gaze Upon the Glittering Caves	Helm's Deep	First time, gain 1 Hope or reduce Shadow by 2.	Roh, pg. 49
Go Hunting in the Everholt	Aldburg or Edoras	**Hunting** roll (TN 18) to roll on table. See undertaking for more information.	Roh, pg. 39
Go Riding with the Horse-herds	Aldburg, Edoras or Helm's Deep	**Athletics** roll to roll on table. See undertaking for more information.	Roh, pg. 30
Guard the Crossings	Aldburg or Edoras	See undertaking for more information.	Roh, pg. 53
The Hills of Seeing and Hearing	Aldburg or Edoras	See undertaking for more information.	Roh, pg. 54
Honour the Kings of Old	Riders of Rohan	*Heal Corruption* using **Song**. On a success, reduce Shadow by 3, by 6 on a great success, by 9 on an extraordinary success.	Roh, pg. 20
Meet Patron (Saruman)	Isengard	Deliver information to Saruman, gain 1 Experience point.	Roh, pg. 116
Open Fangorn as a Sanctuary	Fangorn Forest	As *Open New Sanctuary*.	Roh, pg. 84
Open Isengard as a Sanctuary	Isengard	As *Open New Sanctuary*. See undertaking also.	Roh, pg. 116
Sparring with the King's Guard	Edoras	**Athletics**, **Sword** or **Spear** roll (TN 18). Success increases Tolerance with Rohirrim by +1, +2 on great success, +3 on extraordinary success. Failure loses point of Hope, but gains Experience point.	Roh, pg. 19
Study with the Ents	Fangorn Forest	Learn lore of Ents or listen to Song of the Forest. See undertaking for more information.	Roh, pg. 85
Weeding in Fangorn	Fangorn Forest	Add +3 to Endurance loss inflicted to Orcs in next Adventuring phase.	Roh, pg. 85

- Of Patrons - and Patronage

Elrond raised his eyes and looked at him, and Frodo felt his heart pierced by the sudden keenness of the glance. "If I understand aright all that I have heard," he said, "I think that this task is appointed for you, Frodo."

During the course of their adventures, the player-heroes may adopt one or more important personalities as their company's patrons. But why seek out a patron in the first place? After all, there are plenty of individuals looking for stout-hearted folk to accomplish tasks of a dangerous nature: why get attached to any particular one, especially if they expect you and your fellows to prove yourselves to them before you all go off to risk your lives for their causes?

Patrons are not merchants seeking help guarding their goods or farmers who want the wolves killing their sheep dealt with. Those few individuals who qualify as patrons are renowned characters with the highest levels of power and influence in Middle-earth. A company does not take up their cause for riches, though admittedly treasure can flow from certain patrons, but rather because they are the personalities who matter. In working with them, heroes can have a direct hand in shaping the course of events shaping Middle-earth... that is why one takes up with a patron.

The Benefits of Patronage

A potential patron might expect the companions to prove themselves before they accept them into their service, because there is more to their relationship than just a 'friendly association' between them. The actions a company takes will directly reflect upon the patron that they serve and, as such, the patron wants to ensure that the heroes are trustworthy before sending them forth to work their will. While the company may indeed become friends with a patron, they also have a formal relationship with them that implies a greater level of support than that offered to mere hired hands.

Patrons frequently have access to both practical and unusual resources that they can potentially offer to a company that is associated with them.

The following types of Patronage broadly represent the different categories of assistance that a given patron can offer to a company associated with them. Some of the benefits are automatically granted to a company working for such a patron. Others must be arranged for through an encounter with the patron, using the *Meet Patron* Fellowship phase undertaking (see *The One Ring Roleplaying Game*, page 197).

Types of Patronage

Direct Assistance

This patron has, in their service, soldiers, allies, or other martial resources that can be brought to bear. Some individually powerful patrons may be able to personally assist the company or be willing to use their abilities on behalf of the company. Loremasters should be wary that overuse of this type of Patronage does not result in the patron always coming to the company's rescue. If a company needs to be constantly rescued, they probably aren't worth a patron's time.

(Note that the company could be the direct assistance that the patron sends out to help others allied with them.)

Exceptional Resources

This patron has access to unusual assets beyond that which gold can readily buy and can make them available to the company as needed. The exceptional resources each patron can grant to a company are discussed under each individual description below.

Information

This patron has the ability to access information that the company would be hard pressed to discover on their own. Dark secrets, old lore or news from far away are all useful to any company. Several patrons acquire their news from their influence with birds, giving them the latest tidings on swift wings. Elves seem to hear news "as quick as water flows, or quicker" – though whether this news passes between swiftly wandering companies or the murmurs of the land, who can say? Saruman the White knows much that is thought hidden, for he (secretly) has access to a palantír.

Once every Adventuring phase, the players may invoke their patron's source of information, and have the Loremaster reveal to them one item of information normally outside their ability to obtain. The invocation must naturally be compatible with the means of communication available to the patron.

Reward

The patron is a personality of great affluence and can honour the companions with gifts from their personal treasury or armoury. Heroes who gain a new Valour level may receive their Reward from such a patron: when this is the case, the Loremaster should work closely with the player to customise the Reward received, to suit the characteristics of the patron giving it. Alternatively, all members of the company rewarded by a patron can be considered to effectively enjoy a *Prosperous* Standard of Living for a year. (Individual company members who were already *Rich* remain so.)

Magical Boons

The affairs of Wizards and other powerful beings may be subtle, but the benefits for knowing them can be great. But magic is not dispensed lightly, as wondrous objects or powerful spells are as likely to help heroes as to worsen their plight, attracting unnecessary attention to them (see for example the rules for *The Eye of Mordor*, in *Rivendell*, page 111). The capability of each patron to bestow magical boons upon a company is discussed under each individual description below.

Standing

Patrons with a wide influence in the world lend companies associated with them some of their prestige. All companies associated with such a patron effectively have a Standing one level higher (this bonus will never raise Standing above 5, however) when dealing with individuals from the culture most associated with the patron. Heroes working for such a patron are widely and openly known to represent them and their actions will be assisted and evaluated, accordingly.

A company with such an influential patron can call upon them to lend their direct support to influence powerful individuals with any culture that respects their patron. In such a case the patron's good word will likely open doors that even a high personal level of Standing cannot typically budge, or at the least, increase the Tolerance in encounters with such individuals. Companies that are leery of being 'in the spotlight' as well as those involved in more covert activities can choose not to profit from the benefits of this type of Patronage. Should they claim it once, though, they cannot waive it again without actively disguising their identities or permanently disassociating themselves from the patron.

Sigil

Some patrons prefer that their agents work subtlety and conceal their allegiances unless revealing them is absolutely necessary. Such patrons frequently use a rune, or other sign, that can be immediately recognized as their personal 'signature' by their followers and some enemies. Companies that have been granted the use of their patron's sigil can display it at need to declare their allegiance and help draw assistance from their patron's allies – or cow their enemies. An individual that reveals their patron's sigil to a Loremaster character who is allied to the same patron can expect immediate support. In game terms, a hero gains a bonus Success die usable during an episode spent interacting with the allied character.

Notable Patrons

The following is a list that describes a number of the most powerful individuals living at the end of the Third Age that may act as patrons for a company of adventurers. Each description contains a number of entries, useful for the Loremaster to determine what type of support they may offer to the heroes, and what they might ask in return.

Requirements

Each entry lists the requirements for their patronage. At least one member of the company must meet these requirements.. A number of patrons may have more unusual or subtle requirements too.

Resources

This details the types of aid a patron may provide the company if successfully approached during a Meet Patron undertaking.

Note that these are only suggestions, and the Loremaster should feel free to alter them to better fit their own campaign.

For example, Radagast is thought of as a reclusive and somewhat otherworldly character, and his Resources entry reflects this (Information, Magical Boons, Sigil). A Loremaster may wish to emphasise that the Brown Wizard is a grand sponsor of the Woodmen and deeply involved in their affairs. In their campaign, Radagast might therefore provide access to Information, Magical Boons, and Standing instead.

Bard the Bowman, King of Dale

Requirements: Valour 3 or Standing 1 (Barding, Man of the Lake, or Dwarf of the Lonely Mountain)
Resources: Direct Assistance, Reward, Standing

The Dragonslayer has both competent troops and loyal people. While he has considerable, and growing, resources, much of his wealth is spoken for, wrapped up in projects expanding Dale and his kingdom. Both Dale and Lake-town are becoming trade hubs, bringing all sorts of unusual folk into Bard's kingdom, folk that may need an eye kept on their activities.

Missions for King Bard generally involve gathering information or escorting valuables beyond his realm (both objects and people). While the Bowman's position is fairly secure, there are voices in Dale that point out his lack of "truly royal" blood, leading to opportunities for political intrigue as well.

Beorn the Skinchanger

Requirements: Valour 3 or Standing 1 (Beorning or Woodman)
Resources: Direct Assistance, Magical Boons, Standing

Beorn as a patron is discussed in *The One Ring Roleplaying Game*, page 274. Beorn's Magical Boons are many, the most famous being his honeycakes.

Dáin Ironfoot, King under the Mountain

Requirements: Valour 3 or Standing 1 (Barding or Dwarf)
Resources: Information, Reward, Standing

The ravens of the Lonely Mountain bring all sorts of interesting news to the ears of King Dáin. The King under the Mountain often has need of hands to roam far beyond the Lonely Mountain, sometimes to ensure that bargains are being kept, at other times to look for lost treasures of old. While he is most inclined to trust his own folk, he is all too aware of his own people's insular nature and does his best to choose agents who can reach out to people from other cultures. While a Rich Dwarven character has little need of material rewards, having the ear of the King is priceless.

Gandalf the Grey

Requirements: Wisdom 3 or Standing 1 (Hobbit of the Shire, Ranger of the North or Elf)
Resources: Direct Assistance, Magical Boons, Sigil

The Grey Pilgrim roams at will across the face of the north, down south, and then back again. There is no knowing what a mission for Mithrandir might involve, though it is fairly likely to be both exciting and dangerous as it will, almost invariably, be directed at somehow thwarting the Shadow.

Lord Elrond of Rivendell

Requirements: Valour or Wisdom 3, or Standing 1 (Ranger of the North or Elf of Rivendell)
Resources: Information, Exceptional Resources, Magical Boons

Elrond Half-elven has seen three ages of the world, accumulating both wisdom and pain. Missions for Elrond typically involve ending threats, seeking out hidden information, or occasionally recovering lost Elven artefacts. He often sends his agents forth to safeguard other folk without their knowledge. Elrond is aware of much that goes on in the wide world and his trusted agents are often given the wondrous Elven cordial called miruvor. (See *Rivendell*, page 17.)

Radagast the Brown

Requirements: Wisdom 3 or Standing 1 (Beorning or Woodman)
Resources: Information, Magical Boons, Sigil

Radagast as a patron is discussed in *The One Ring Roleplaying Game*, page 274 . His friendship with the birds of Mirkwood ensures that the Brown Wizard frequently knows news from afar before anyone else even has a whisper of it. He doesn't like to get involved in politics, so despite the Woodmen's deep respect for him, he avoids unduly influencing their ways.

Saruman the White

Requirements: See below
Resources: Information, Magical Boons, Standing, Sigil

From ancient bits of knowledge, to the deepest secrets of the Enemy, the master of Isengard is mighty in lore. Saruman has the ear of many powerful individuals, giving him a great deal of sway in certain matters. Missions for the White Wizard often probe into dark matters, hidden secrets, and old tombs. Saruman actively seeks out companies that might prove useful to him in the future, often whether they know it or not. Any company who meets Saruman during the Adventuring phase must take him as a patron in the following Fellowship phase.

The Lord of the Eagles

Requirements: Valour 4 or Standing 3 (Elves)
Resources: Direct Assistance, Exceptional Resources, Information

Few companies can impress the Lord of the Eagles enough to gain his patronage, but if they show great courage and tenacity in standing against the Shadow, he may find a use for them... All birds pay homage to the Lord of the Eagles and he hears much that occurs far from his lofty eerie in the Misty Mountains. His Exceptional Resources are his eagles, who, if the need is great, can take heroes very far, very fast.

Thengel King, Lord of Rohan

Requirements: Valour 3 or Standing 1 (Riders of Rohan)
Resources: Direct Assistance, Reward, Standing

The King of Rohan is beloved by his people, but he worries for their future, for he can see much darkness ahead. Missions for Thengel King involve scouting out the doings of Orcs, reclaiming lost pieces of the history of the Eorlingas and acting as ambassadors for Rohan. Thengel's favoured agents are frequently rewarded with one of the magnificent steeds of the Rohirrim.

Thranduil, King of the Woodland Realm

Requirements: Wisdom 3 or Standing 1 (Elves of Mirkwood, Barding or Men of the Lake)
Resources: Information, Magical Boons, Sigil

Despite his seclusion, Thranduil knows much of what happens in Mirkwood, even far beyond borders of the Woodland Realm. The King of the Wood Elves is well versed in unusual lore and knows much that is hidden. Missions undertaken for Thranduil will often help to keep the Woodland Realm secure in some fashion, or will leave the forest far behind to punish those who think they can outrun the King's justice simply because they've fled the shadows of Mirkwood.

famous - companies - of the wild

"Near is the hour when the Lost should come forth, And the Grey Company ride from the North."

Scouts of the Southern Wilds

Years Active: 2946-3019
First Meeting: Rhosgobel

As the numbers of Goblins and other foul creatures in Mirkwood increased with the power of the Necromancer, Radagast the Brown sent word throughout Eriador and Wilderland for aid. But the lords of the Free Folk either did not recognise the threat mustering in Southern Mirkwood, or could not spare a company. Only a few adventurers arrived at Rhosgobel, but with these few Radagast created a small band, the Scouts of the Southern Wilds. These Scouts work to uncover the plots and schemes of the Necromancer, that the Free Folk might not be caught unawares.

Missions typically undertaken by this company include scouting out enemy encampments, protecting travellers on the Old Forest Road and setting ambushes for raiding parties, aiming to reduce their numbers before they reach more inhabited lands.

Special Rules
Much like the Rangers of the North, the Scouts keep their identities hidden to protect themselves and their kinsmen, should the Shadow seek to strike at a more vulnerable target. Consequently, they do not enjoy the fame gained by more traditional warriors, and player-heroes cannot gain Standing with their own culture while enrolled with the Scouts of the Southern Wilds.

However, the lords of Wilderland hold the group in some regard, if for no reason more than they serve the Brown Wizard. Accordingly, patronage comes more easily to the company. Members of the company see the Valour or Wisdom requirement of any Patron reduced by 1, as long as that Patron is a lord of Wilderland. Radagast is automatically a Patron to this company.

There are different motivations that might inspire player-heroes to join this company:

Dwarves:

- Thráin the Second languished in the dungeons of Dol Guldur for many years before he died. Returning his body to Balin or Dáin Ironfoot would make a tale worth of song, and great reward and favour.

- Keeping the Dwarf-road open allows the crafts of the Dwarves to pass from the Blue Mountains to the Iron Hills and back again. And perhaps with Dáin secure on the Throne under the Mountain, a clear road to Khazad-dûm might lead to an expedition to reclaim its ancient mansions.

Elves:

- The Woodland Realm has seen its borders increasingly driven north by the Shadow. Any act that might allow the Elves to remake the garden that once was the greatest of forests would be a great deed indeed.

- The first Elves tamed the trees by singing to them, teaching their Shepherds the gift of speech. Perhaps the trees can be tamed once more; a concordance between the Elves and trees might do much to push the Shadow from the forest.

Hobbits:

- Mirkwood is no place for Hobbits. However, those of Tookish bent may find great stories to be told from such a venture, stories that may be told and retold at feasts for years to come.

- The Curators of the Mathom-House of Michel Delving are vigorous collectors of mathoms. To earn a place among these esteemed Hobbits, one must find a mathom worthy of its own exhibit. Surely some trinket from Wilderland, along with a good story, would make for an acclaimed mathom.

Men:

- It is whispered that dark times are upon Middle-earth. In such times, making allies of neighbours is important; reducing the dangers of Mirkwood allows the chieftains of the Northmen to pass messages across the forest – and companies of spears, if necessary.

- While the Beornings are led by Beorn and the Bardings by King Bard, the Woodmen lack a true leader. Making a name for oneself by courageous deeds could bring them to follow such a Man, regardless of their place of birth.

Gwarieg en-Angol

Years Active: 2946-3021
First Meeting: Rivendell

Once a land of many kingdoms of Men and Elves, today Eriador is almost deserted. Along its paths, ill-favoured Men and bands of Orcs can be seen searching old ruins before returning south.

It is also said that the dead walk amongst the cairns of old Tyrn Gorthad, and rumours persist about the mustering of Orcs, Trolls, and things more foul yet in the hills surrounding ruined Carn Dûm. With this in mind, Glorfindel formed a company, *Gwarieg en-Angol* the "Wardens of Deep Lore".

Sworn to protect and preserve relics of ancient days, the company is charged with watching over Tyrn Gorthad, Eregion and the ruins of Arthedain, to ensure the Shadow cannot turn ancient wonders to foul purpose.

Missions the *Gwarieg en-Angol* carry out range from transporting precious objects to safe havens, searching for lost artefacts, maintaining watch around locations known to still hold ancient prizes, and hunting down and dispersing groups that might seek to despoil such sites.

Special Rules

Glorfindel is automatically the patron of the company. Members who prove themselves are occasionally permitted to keep lesser relics as reward for their service, with the understanding that this reward will be used to further the aims of the *Gwarieg en-Angol*. However, the *Gwarieg en-Angol* may only ever open a sanctuary at Rivendell, and all members must endeavour to return there at least once a year, returning once-lost treasures to safe keeping, and passing word of their travels to the lore-masters of the Last Homely House.

Folk of all races may have interest in joining the company:

All:

- The captains of the Witch-king ravaged many lands, and returned to Angmar often laden with their ill-

gotten gains. Some of those treasures perhaps remain yet in fallen Carn Dûm – recovering them before the Orcs of Gundabad seize them is a task too important to be overlooked.

Dwarves:

- The greatest of Dwarven treasures, the Seven Rings, are said to be either made part of the hoards of Dragons or gathered to the Enemy. Recovering one of these rings would be a feat that would outmatch even the recovery of the Arkenstone.

- Many treasures of the Dwarves have been lost in Goblin-wars and overrun halls. Finding these ancient relics is a task worthy of any Dwarf, and will earn them a great name.

Elves:

- The secrets of the *Gwaith-i-mírdain*, the greatest jewelsmiths of the Elves, lie buried in the ruins of the land of Eregion. Among the lost wonders of the Noldor may be a light that could hold the Shadow back, if only for a time.

- If one last deed were to be done before taking ship to the West, this might be the best. Recovering relics to take to the Undying Lands or giving them to the Free Peoples to arm themselves against the Enemy allows for an honourable departure.

Hobbits:

- Poking around in old, uncomfortable holes isn't Hobbit-like, and doing so may earn one a queer reputation. However, the mathoms to be found in these holes are said to be of notable interest to certain folk.

- Having wandered many times past the Barrow-downs, you've always wondered what's buried in those tombs. Now is your chance to find out – and maybe carry a treasure back for your old gaffer!

Men:

- The cairns and barrows throughout the North have long held treasures of lords and kings now lost to time. While this is the rightful place for these treasures, it is far better they be in the hands of their descendants than those of Orcs.

- If this is to be the age of Men, arms must be found to defeat the Enemy. The artefacts of ages past were crafted with secrets long lost; uncovering these secrets might teach the smiths of Men methods and crafts of great power.

The Waywatchers of the Bree-land

Years Active: 2951-3017
First Meeting: Bree

In the Bree-land, the folk of outlying farmsteads have reported strange beasts wandering the wilds, killing livestock without eating them, as though it was done for sport or pleasure. Travellers out by dusk have reported being pursued by formless shapes just out of sight.

Recently, a child was stolen from a small farm, her body found some days later. Finally, the folk of the villages of the Bree-land have begun whispering of things hiding in the shadows between houses, and Goblins running across rooftops. People are scared, and are taking to shuttering their windows and locking their doors at night.

The elders of the villages of the Bree-land have been forced to act. While watchmen are adequate in safeguarding the four settlements, they do not have the men to patrol the outlying farms.

The player-heroes have been recruited to deal with threats in the wilds bordering the Bree-land, Chetwood and the Midgewater, before they become a threat to the Bree-land proper. Things old and dark lurk on the fringes of the well-ploughed fields of Hobbits and Men, while their masters often lie in the further wilds. Accordingly, the company may be asked to range throughout central Eriador, to stamp out the root of any threats.

The Waywatchers can expect to work with strange folk and vagabonds who share the same ends; Rangers of the North, Bounders of the Shire, even the Wandering Companies of the Elves. Outlanders have been hired to enable the Waywatchers to deal more effectively with these peoples.

Folk of all races may have an interest in joining the company:

All:

- Without doubt, trouble is coming to Eriador. It is said the Dark Lord has declared himself in Mordor, and perhaps his servant will return to the throne of Angmar as well. Lying at the most important crossroads in Eriador, control of the Bree-land will be vital in this coming struggle.

Dwarves:

- The Bree-land is the last vestige of civilisation on the East Road until the land of the Beornings far to the east. It is important that it remains somewhere that Dwarven travellers can restock before undertaking the long journey across the Lone Lands.

- With the folk of the Shire, the Bree-folk have long been friends in trade with the Dwarves of the Blue Mountains. A Dwarf should stand with his friends – not only is it right and proper, but also something that will be remembered when bartering in the future.

Elves:

- Whether the Breelanders know it or not, Bree serves as an important waystation for Elves passing to the West. Though they do not rest within the walls of Bree proper, they often stay near to the lights of Bree-hill, knowing the things that wander the wilds will stay far from them. It seems this has changed...

- The Wandering Companies have found the folk of the Bree-land a valuable source of information of the goings-on throughout Eriador, its folk collecting tales from travellers from afar. Bree must be guarded, if only for its value in this way.

Hobbits:

- The Bree-land is home, and you'll not be having ne'er-do-wells tramping over your neighbour's fields. Working with a band of like-minded folk, stern words will be flung at these miscreants should they cross your path. As far as these rumours of beasts – a quick stone to the eye should fix their prowling.

- Tookish blood must have taken hold, for as soon as rumours spread to the Shire of strangers in the countryside round Bree, you grabbed your walking stick and headed east. Having a look at these queer folk might be worth a free plate and ale, should you bring your stories back to the Green Dragon.

Men:

- The Bree-land is home, and good neighbours need to band together when strange folk and dangerous beasts threaten. Some folk tell themselves that holding a spear beside the gate is doing their part, but this threat needs to be dealt with before it reaches the thorny hedges of Bree, not after.

- While the Dúnedain are often shunned by the folk of the Bree-land, it is only for their simplicity and lack of worldliness. As caretakers of the crown of the Northern Kingdom, watching after the Breelanders is part of your duty.

The Hunters of the North

Years Active: 2946-3019
First Meeting: Any Northern Sanctuary (Rivendell, Beorn's Hall, Thranduil's Hall, Erebor, Dale)

The White Council has learned of stirrings in the far north; of Hill-men heeding calls from the broken towers of Carn Dûm, of chieftains of Rhudaur rebuilding overgrown ruins deep in the hills of that land, of Troll-moots in the Ettenmoors and of Orc drums beating in the peaks of the Grey Mountains. And so it is that the lords of the North have come together for the first time since the Battle of Five Armies, finding common cause in learning what is behind the renewed vigour of the colder lands.

Missions this company can expect to undertake are delving into Goblin caves, scouting the passes into the Grey Mountains and exploring the ancient ruins of Rhudaur, Angmar and Gundabad. The actions the player-heroes take can determine the fate of Arnor and Wilderland during the War of the Ring, when the strongest efforts of the Free Peoples are exerted in Rohan and Gondor.

Folk of all races may have interest in joining the company:

All:

- It has been long since any folk not in the employ of the Enemy have walked the lands of the far north. Exploring and mapping these lands could be valuable to the Free Peoples.

Dwarves:

- The Grey Mountains and the Withered Heath remain the abode of Dragons and worms, ancient enemies of the Dwarves. It is said that four of the Seven Rings were consumed by these beasts; perhaps searching the gullet of a Dragon will yield one of these ancient prizes.

- Several Dwarven cities lost to tides of Orcs lie in the northern Misty Mountains. Perhaps efforts there may lead to their return to Dwarven hands, as Erebor has.

Elves:

- Thranduil's Court is the bulwark of northern Rhovanion. Should a threat come from the north, it will be Wood Elves that must deal first with it in earnest: the Men of the Anduin Vales are too few, and the Dwarves and Men of Erebor and Dale too far away.

- As those weary of mortal lands pass to the West, their path must remain unobstructed. Should Angmar rise once more, these travellers could become vulnerable to raids from the north as they walk the long wilderness of the Lone Lands. They must be permitted to reach the Grey Havens unhindered.

Hobbits:

- It is said that strange things are afoot in the Northfarthing. A bounder of high esteem swears he saw a Giant, and a Dwarven tinker attests to being chased by Goblins near Bindbale Wood. While a Took might deal with these matters with a club, perhaps calmer heads may be able to talk some sense into these miscreants.

- Whilst some Hobbits speak of talking sense to Goblins, those of Tookish blood know the only thing that talks to Goblins is a stout club. With the Kings of Men no longer sending envoys, perhaps a messenger ought to be sent out to seek the problem at its source.

Men:

- The Northmen once made their capital near Mount Gundabad. Secrets of the ancient Northmen, and perhaps the relics of kings like Fram the Dragonslayer lie buried there, and perhaps at other sites.

- If the North is to come to war, it is Men who will first feel the bite of Orc-spears, for the lands of Men lie on open lands, not hidden in forests or buried in mountains.

The Cragsmen of Balin's Colony

Years Active: 2989-2994
First Meeting: Any

This company is only active for a relatively short window in the Tale of Years. Its members can be recruited anywhere, but the bulk of its task will be in the mountains near Moria, with the purpose of harrying Orcs and their allies while Balin's folk seek to reclaim their ancient halls. The Dwarves will not permit the company to engage in the taking of Moria (indeed, that is a tale for another supplement...), as they view this as a duty that falls to them alone. However, their numbers are small, and they will accept aid to prevent their efforts from being thwarted.

Missions Balin may ask the company to undertake are raiding Orc encampments, ambushing scouting parties, protecting supplies and lines of communication with other settlements of the Free Peoples, and sapping tunnels linking Moria to other Orc-holds. In the final, desperate years of the colony, the company may be asked to aid the Dwarves in their struggle to stave off their inevitable fate.

Special Rules
Balin is automatically a patron of the company.

Reasons player-heroes may wish to join such a company:

All:

- The legend of Moria is great, as are tales of the treasures therein. Surely the Dwarves of Moria shall reward those who aid them handsomely.

Dwarves:

- A group of vagrants, burglars and Elves can't be left to their own in as important a venture as this. They require a Dwarven eye and ear, and you've been asked by one of Balin's captains to fill this role.

- Your beard is yet short and the Halls of Khazad-dûm are viewed to be too dangerous for a Dwarf as young as yourself. Perhaps if you prove yourself in the mountains, Balin will take notice of you, and permit you to undertake the efforts of the older Dwarves.

Elves:

- Should the Dwarves seek to reopen the Black Chasm and stir that which should remain buried, the Elves of Lórien and Rivendell must know of it. This is a way to learn of happenings in Balin's efforts without questioning him directly.

- The Elves of Eregion and the Dwarves of Khazad-dûm once shared an ancient friendship. This is an opportunity to rekindle that friendship, and perhaps restore that ancient land, just as the Dwarves seek to reclaim theirs.

Hobbits:

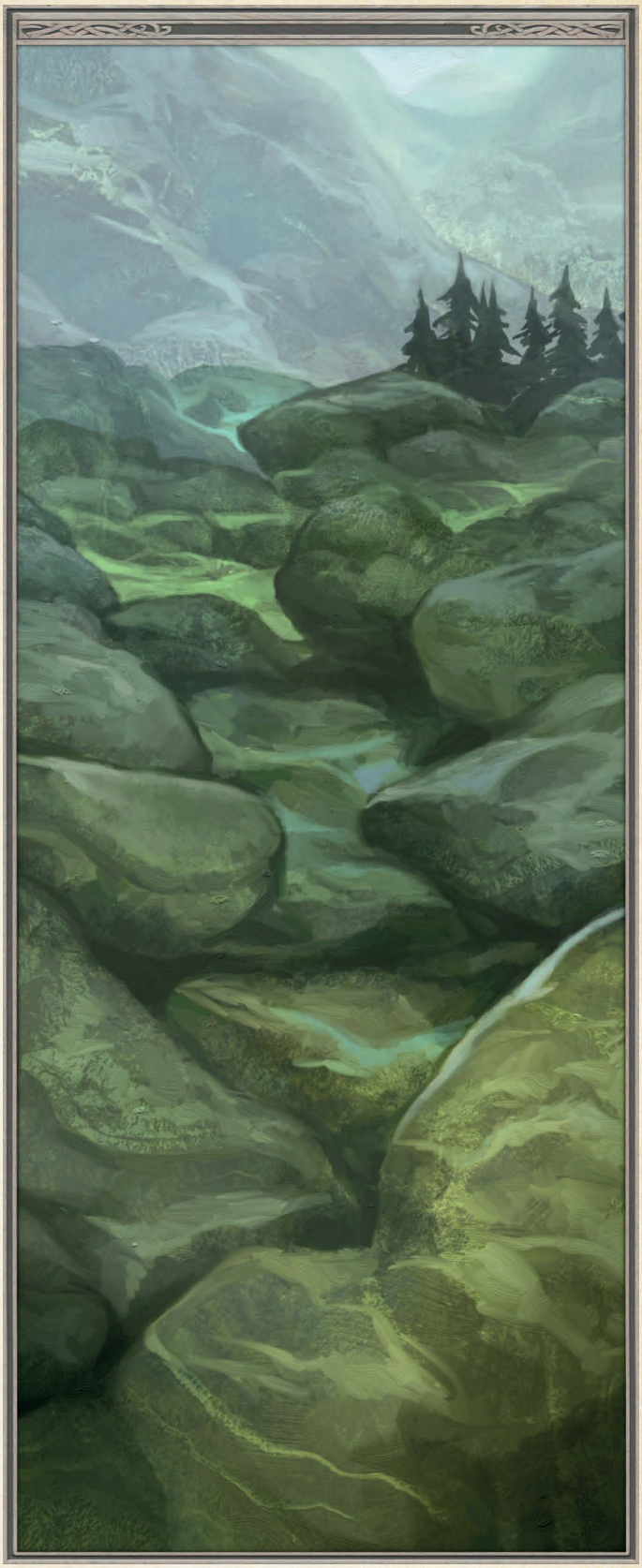
- Your palate has gotten you in a fix once again, as your gaffer always said it would. Told of a plan to recover a stock of fine Dwarven ales and ancient Elven wines lost in something described as a grand Hobbit-hole, you quickly joined.

- Somehow, Hobbits have acquired a reputation for burglary among the Dwarves. Recruited for this role but not being quite sure what exactly a burglar is, you packed your gardening tools and headed along, feeling quite Tookish.

Men:

- The Dwarves of Moria and Men of the Anduin Vales share common cause in the cleansing of the Misty Mountains. Perhaps if victory is won here, the tide of Orcs may be pushed further north, where they may threaten Mannish lands no more.

- The songs that will be sung of this undertaking will be great among all peoples, not just the Dwarves. You will earn a great tale or song, and your name will live longer than the short lives of Men.



- the passage - of years

But Frodo kept up the custom of giving Bilbo's Birthday Party year after year until they got used to it.

The events of the Fellowship phase play an important part in the feel of *The One Ring Roleplaying Game*. The heroes' activities over the passing of years illustrates how companions change and are changed in turn by the world about them. Many Loremasters will be content to let their players simply narrate the events of their heroes' lives, drawing inspiration from their travels, goals and the various undertakings they complete without adding any additional mechanics. However, some groups may wish to invite a touch of the vagaries of life into their characters' stories.

This section provides optional new rules to do just that, reflecting the uncertain events brought about by the Tale of Years.

Yearly Events

If you wish to use the Yearly Events rules, each hero should make a Weal & Woe roll at the start of each Year's End Fellowship phase. The player should roll a single Feat die to see if anything unusual – for good or ill – occurs.

The entries on the Weal & Woe table are all examples of the sorts of events a given roll may portend. Just as players have agency in determining the course of their character's activities during Year's End, so do they have a say in how triumphs and misfortunes enter their heroes' lives. The Loremaster and the player determine together exactly what occurred, guided by the result of the die roll and the examples presented.

Many of the entries depend on where a hero spends their Year's End. If there are two entries, the first always presumes a hero has returned home; the second, that they did not.

Using Hobbit Tales

If you own a copy of *Hobbit Tales* from the Green Dragon Inn, then its cards may be used to supplement the result of the Weal & Woe die roll. The Loremaster or the affected player may simply draw one or two cards, and seek inspiration from their titles, illustrations, quotes, or Effect icons.

Weal & Woe Table

1-2 - A Grim Year

A loved one comes down with a disease or a seemingly incurable affliction. A house is ransacked by bandits or a natural disaster. Friends or relatives are slain in battle. A blight afflicts crops, resulting in a bad harvest. A friend is poisoned or accused of a terrible crime. Troubling feuds occurs between allies. Food stores are diminished in the winter, resulting in a hero going out without provisions. An ally breaks trust with the hero, abandoning them.

- The hero does not provide a point to the Fellowship pool for the length of the following Adventuring phase.
- Alternatively, if the hero has a holding, he may choose to roll the Feat die twice keeping the worst result on the next Holding Upkeep roll (see *The Darkening of Mirkwood*, page 8).

3-5 - The Quiet of the World/Burdens

At Home: Little out of the ordinary occurs this year. A hero spends time with their family, meets up with old friends or undertakes small projects about their home, but nothing unusual comes to pass.

Burdens: Problems afflict the character's friends or loved ones and the hero's absence is keenly felt. Goods are stolen, debts are called in early or long forgotten obligations are suddenly brought to the fore. Friends who have been neglected or ignored may cease to regard the character favourably.

Without evidence that the hero values their friendship, some 'friends' may actively start speaking ill of the hero, or be willing to plot against them in the future.

6-8 - Blessings/Well Guided and Well Guarded

At Home: The hero's sacrifices are publicly acknowledged by their folk. Someone who the hero helped save in a previous adventure seeks out the hero to thank them and bestow some personal token of esteem or gratitude. A small windfall, equal to a Success die worth of Treasure points, comes to the character. The character makes a new ally or an old ally becomes a good friend.

Not at Home: Little out of the ordinary occurs this year. The hero spends time in a safe haven, meeting old friends and making new ones, but nothing unusual comes to pass.

9-10 - A Worthy Year

A loved one recovers from a lingering malady. The hero is forewarned of treachery or deceit. The character's efforts on behalf of their folk are taken up in song. Gifts or rewards totalling 6 Treasure points are given to the character. The character is 'adopted' by a particularly clever beast. One of the hero's holdings is significantly improved in some way, increasing its value.

- The hero provides 1 additional point to the Fellowship pool for the length of the following Adventuring phase.
- Alternatively, if the hero has a holding, he may choose to roll the Feat die twice keeping the best result on the next Holding Upkeep roll.

ᚠ or 👁 - Life-changing Events

Upon obtaining such die results, the Loremaster alone decides what happens, possibly reserving not to disclose fully the nature of his decision, especially in the case of ill-fortune. In choosing the precise details of the events, the Loremaster must keep in mind that a positive result should have better consequences than a roll of 9-10, and that a negative result should be worse than rolling 1 or 2.

Examples of ᚠ or 👁 results follow.

ᚠ: Good Fortune

The hero either sires or bears a child. The character becomes the head of their family or is asked to take on a more prominent role in a family business. The character is invited to join a powerful organisation, famous, clandestine, or otherwise. A new romance finds the character (see *Courting and the Fellowship Phase* opposite).The hero receives a large inheritance, reward or bequest, such as a new holding or even a Precious Object (see the *Rivendell* supplement).

👁: Ill Fortune

A close loved one dies: a child, a spouse or an heir (see *The Heirs of Heroes*, opposite). A holding is completely lost, destroyed by disaster or malice. The character is accused of a crime and, though innocent, has no means of proving it. An old wound lingers on, never properly healing (and thus

eventually causing a temporary reduction of Endurance). The hero's goods are stolen, causing the loss of Treasure points. A sworn enemy discovers the whereabouts of the hero's home.

Courting and the Fellowship Phase

Many adventurers consciously avoid having any close relationships, for they are all too aware of the dangers that they regularly face, especially when they stand against the Shadow. Still, friends, families and a cherished home give a hero something to fight for. Sometimes, a player may decide that their hero has taken a strong fancy to a Loremaster character who they've met during their adventures. At other times, perhaps it makes sense for their character to cement an alliance with a marriage. In either case, a player may decide that the time has come for their hero to marry.

A player who wishes to engage their character into a relationship, romantic or otherwise, should discuss it with their Loremaster and introduce it in the Fellowship phase. If marriage is their intention, they will have to court the Loremaster character they fancy. Courting is a formal practice that effectively declares a character's interest in taking the courted person as a spouse. The various cultures each have their own customs about such things. Some require lavish gifts, others only that both parties wish to get married. Those from noble houses or who have a sworn lord (such as the Rohirrim) generally have to ask their lord's permission in order to wed.

It usually takes a bit of time and patience to successfully court someone, especially since the potential partner will doubtless need to take the hero's dangerous 'profession' into consideration before deciding.

The Heirs of Heroes

The life of an adventurer is seldom one of ease and those that seek out trouble are quite likely to find it. Once a hero has had a close call or two, they may well decide that the time has come to formally choose an heir. While many adventurers will select a family member as their successor it certainly isn't required. Some heroes have no blood relations to pick from or simply find none of their own family worthy!

Heroic Heritage

When a hero dies, succumbs to the Shadow or retires from adventuring, his player must create a new character to take his place. When this happens, the new adventurer starts the game with a number of additional Experience points, representing the knowledge and experience the previous character was able to pass on to his heir. This bonus is shown on the Heroic Heritage table below, and is based on the total number of Experience points that a hero accumulated up to the moment of his demise or retirement, and is modified by the precise nature of the hero's departure from active adventuring.

Heroic Heritage:

Experience Point Total	Experience Bonus
10-19	2
20-39	4
40-59	6
60-99	8
100-159	10
160-249	12
250+	14

The circumstances in which the hero left the game modifies the amount of Experience inherited by the hero's successor:

- When a hero dies or succumbs to the Shadow, the number of Experience points passed along to his successor is reduced by the number of permanent Shadow points they have. When a hero retires willingly, the heroic heritage bonus is applied without modifiers.
- When a hero dies a proper heroic death, the Loremaster should reward the character by treating it as if the hero retired willingly – and thus shouldn't reduce his Heroic Heritage bonus by the hero's permanent Shadow rating, as the adventurer cleansed the memory of his flaws by sacrificing himself for the benefit of others.
- If the hero formally named an heir (see below), additional benefits apply too.

New Fellowship Undertaking: Name an Heir

When Bilbo was ninety-nine he adopted Frodo as his heir, and brought him to live at Bag End.

An heir is far more than just a designated receiver of a hero's goods; they are an individual the hero sees something of themselves in; a successor who will carry on their fight against darkness. Heirs are, initially, Loremaster characters who will become player-heroes when the player's current character, for whatever reason, leaves play.

When a player chooses this undertaking, they name an heir – they should write this down on their character sheet. The hero immediately gains 1 point of Hope, representing, in part, their dreams for their heir's future. However, if their chosen heir should die, the hero instantly gains 4 Shadow points.

This undertaking may only ever be chosen by a hero once.

Formally declaring an heir provides a number of specific mechanical benefits that occur only when the character retires. The rules for a Heroic Heritage (see *The One Ring Roleplaying Game*, page 282) apply to a Hero's chosen heir, along with the following additional benefits:

Family Heritage

Upon naming an heir, the player may designate one of their hero's favoured common skills as their family heritage. This should be an ability that the player feels truly represents the character, based upon gameplay and personal preferences.

Upon the hero's death or retirement, the heir receives this heritage ability as an additional favoured skill. Additionally, when the heir uses the chosen ability, a single rolled ᚦ results in an extraordinary success.

Heirloom

A hero may designate a single Wondrous Artefact or a Famous Weapon or Armour as an Heirloom to be passed on to their chosen heir.

An heir may take up the Heirloom as a Reward when their Valour rating would allow them to do so. Thus, a new Hero starting with a Valour of 2 may start play with the family Heirloom already in hand, or may acquire it later on.

Famous Weapons or Armour have their first quality automatically activated when they are taken up by an heir. Further qualities can be 'awoken' in the manner described in *Rivendell*, page 97, as the Hero gains levels of Valour. In the case of a Wondrous Artefact, its Blessings are revealed upon passing the item to the heir.

Heirlooms can never be turned in to raise Standing, nor 'set aside' should a similar item come along. They represent far more than a mere possession; they are a noble inheritance, passed down to a worthy heir and cannot simply be cast aside.

Sombre Legacy

It is a difficult thing to watch someone you love and admire falter. An heir starts play with 1 permanent Shadow point for each Flaw that their mentoring hero had when they died (or retired).

A Stout Heart

It is possible to choose an heir from a different Heroic Culture, perhaps even a different race. An heir is an individual who will carry on the activities that a retiring hero wishes to see in the world. It isn't so hard to picture a Beorning, tired of his quarrelling relatives, choosing a steady Woodman as his successor, or a High Elf who can no longer resist the call to go into the West, choosing a noble Dúnadan she admires to take up her blade.

Taking an 'unusual' heir should be an important part in both heroes' stories and worked out with the Loremaster.

part four
CURIOUS DIVERSIONS

- Curious - Diversions

"I cannot say," answered Gandalf. "It depends on many chances."

While looking at a character's Distinctive Features can go a long way to helping a player describe their character, sometimes they need a little more help in coming up with some evocative details to bring their character to life.

This section contains several tables for helping players randomly roll additional details to bestow upon their characters, from personality quirks to the contents of a character's pockets. All should be considered entirely optional and used in a spirit of fun.

Optional: Further Defining Distinctive Features

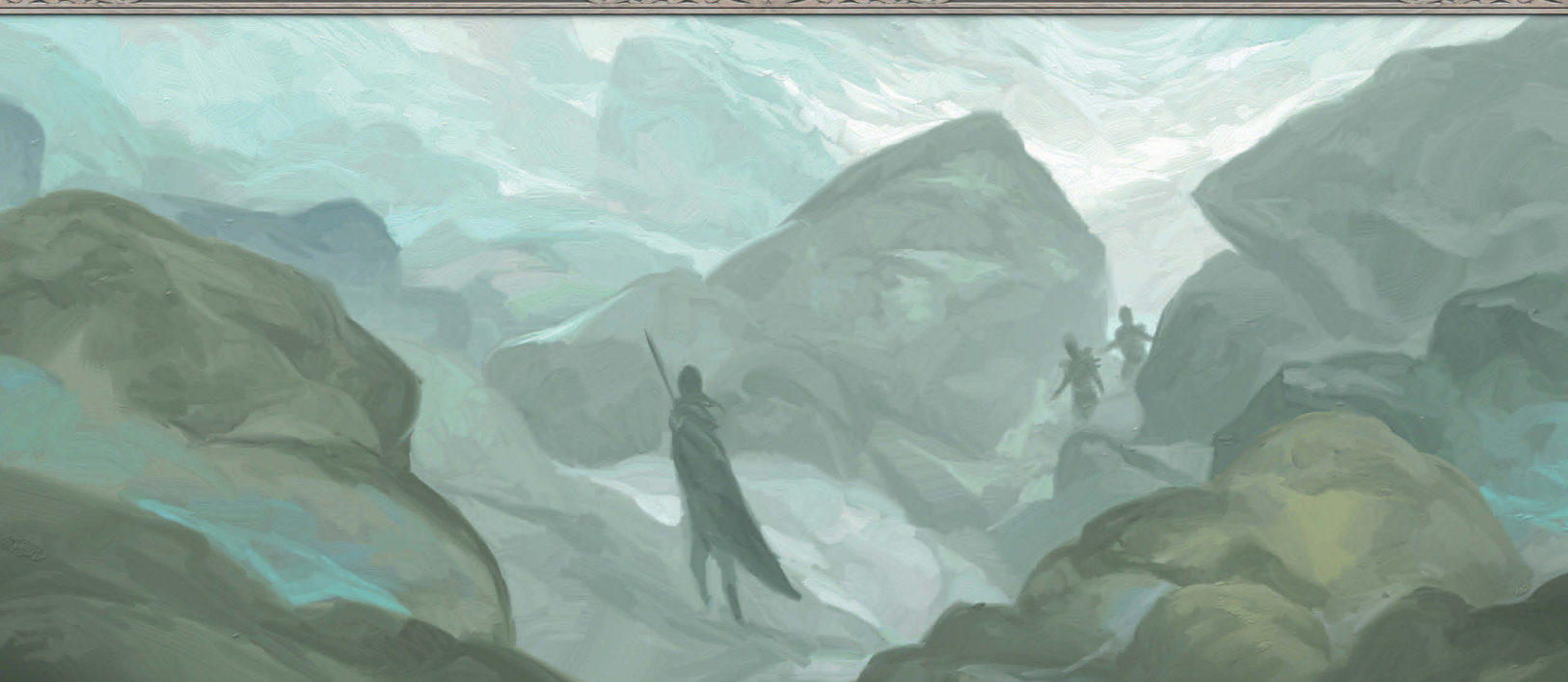
A character's personality is, first and foremost, defined by their traits. The following table offers several alternative takes on the existing Distinctive Features, giving additional, optional definition to them.

Players can either chose from the table on the following page, or roll a Success dice. If players do decide to use these additional descriptors, they should record it in brackets on their character sheet next to the existing trait.

These additional descriptors do not replace the Distinctive Feature, nor do they limit or change its use: The existing Distinctive Feature should be deployed as normal. The additional, bracketed descriptor may be referred to in play to add a more specific definition to a character.

For example, Jon creates a Beorning with the Determined trait, but feels he'd like more detail for his character, since fellow player Naomi has also created a Determined Beorning character. Looking Determined up on the table, he instead decides to be Dogged. He writes Determined (Dogged) on his character sheet. Naomi chooses to refine her character by adding (Resolved) next to her Determined trait.

Where Naomi's character is Determined because she has made some hard decisions in her past, Jon's character is considered Determined because he rarely gives up on a task. Both are mechanically the same, and can use their "Determined" trait in the same way. The bracketed descriptor simply further defines the individual source of their determination.



Customising Distinctive Features Table:

Trait	1-2	3-4	5-6	Dwarf	Elf	Hobbit
Adventurous	Audacious	Intrepid	Enterprising	Headstrong	Listless	Plucky
Bold	Intrepid	Gallant	Confident	Fearless	Valiant	Brave
Cautious	Alert	Vigilant	Judicious	Leery	Prudent	Chary
Clever	Ingenious	Bright	Astute	Canny	Wise	Practical
Cunning	Knowing	Calculating	Wily	Shrewd	Crafty	Furtive
Curious	Scrutinising	Inquiring	Meddling	Interested	Questioning	Inquisitive
Determined	Dogged	Serious	Resolved	Stubborn	Tenacious	Resolute
Eager	Ambitious	Keen	Restless	Ardent	Longing	Willing
Elusive	Subtle	Cagey	Slippery	Skulking	Fleeting	Furtive
Energetic	Lively	Spirited	Vigorous	Industrious	Sprightly	Lusty
Fair	Lovely	Comely	Charming	Rugged	Enchanting	Bonny
Fair-spoken	Courteous	Respectful	Wordy	Poetic	Courtly	Polite
Fierce	Angry	Savage	Vicious	Brutal	Fell	Fiery
Forthright	Direct	Candid	Sincere	Blunt	Plain-spoken	Open
Generous	Benevolent	Thoughtful	Considerate	Lavish	Bounteous	Hospitable
Grim	Stern	Sombre	Glum	Intractable	Implacable	Scowling
Gruff	Brusque	Surly	Grumpy	Curt	Laconic	Dour
Hardened	Toughened	Seasoned	Obdurate	Unbending	Disdainful	Prepared
Hardy	Rugged	Hale	Stalwart	Stout	Enduring	Solid
Honourable	Principled	Distinguished	Virtuous	Esteemed	True	Gallant
Just	Equitable	Conscientious	Righteous	Dependable	Pure	Fair-minded
Keen-eyed	Attentive	Discerning	Perceptive	Heedful	Clear-sighted	Attentive
Lordly	Dignified	Imperious	Regal	Solemn	Gracious	Bossy
Merciful	Forgiving	Kindly	Lenient	Tolerant	Benign	Gentle
Merry	Lively	Joyful	Boisterous	Light-hearted	Mischievous	Jolly
Nimble	Deft	Lithe	Adroit	Handy	Quick	Limber
Patient	Calm	Composed	Quiet	Sober	Serene	Grave
Proud	Noble	Satisfied	Dignified	Magnificent	Majestic	Striking
Quick of Hearing	Aware	Astute	Alert	Ready	Sensitive	Sharp-eared
Reckless	Brash	Daring	Carefree	Impulsive	Excitable	Hasty
Robust	Hearty	Hefty	Brawny	Sturdy	Potent	Strapping
Secretive	Enigmatic	Covert	Taciturn	Silent	Unforthcoming	Tight-lipped
Small	Short	Tiny	Diminutive	Compact	Slight	Wee
Steadfast	Ardent	Relentless	Staunch	Obdurate	Obstinate	Undeterred
Stern	Hard-eyed	Severe	Unsmiling	Steely	Distant	Austere
Suspicious	Doubting	Dubious	Cynical	Mistrustful	Wary	Unsure
Swift	Expeditious	Prompt	Hurried	Abrupt	Quick	Prompt
Tall	Rangy	Lanky	Big	Stocky	Soaring	Lofty (for a Hobbit)
True-hearted	Decent	Steady	Respectable	Upright	Sincere	Honest
Trusty	Faithful	Reliable	Dependable	Scrupulous	Professional	Punctual
Vengeful	Vindictive	Implacable	Hostile	Grudging	Spiteful	Unforgiving
Wary	Circumspect	Leery	Suspicious	Frugal	Watching	Gingerly
Wrathful	Incensed	Furious	Infuriated	Indignant	Storming	Irate

- Travelling - Gear

Travelling gear in *The One Ring* is kept abstracted by design. It doesn't evoke the epic feeling of a Middle-earth story to be worrying about how many tent pegs you have. Unless perhaps you're Sam Gamgee...

However, it can be fun at the table to have a little more detail about what's in your travelling pack when you set off on your adventures. Whether it's to add flavour when setting your camp during journeys, to use when describing your character, to help bring out your character's home culture and personality, or to inspire bonds between characters, it can be of value to have an idea of what's in your luggage.

This section presents two tables on the following page to use in generating items to add detail to your travelling gear.

Detailing Your Travelling Gear

Characters receive a number of items based on their character's Standard of Living:

Standard of Living	
Poor:	1 item
Frugal:	2 items
Martial:	3 items
Prosperous:	4 items
Rich:	5 items

Each item is determined by consulting the first table and rolling a feat die to determine the quality of the item, based on the character's standard of living. Then using the second table, cross reference the results of a feat die and a success die to determine the nature of the item.

Example: Nina's Hobbit Wanderer, Daisy Proudfoot, is setting out on the road. Hailing from the prosperous Shire, she is entitled to roll up 4 pieces of equipment. She rolls a Feat Die scoring 7 – Dependable. Then a Success Die, scoring 6 – Fire making supplies. Then a further Feat Die roll comes up 8 – Fire bow. She has a dependable fire bow.

Next, she rolls a 4 on her Feat Die, then a Success Die roll of 2, then a Feat Die roll of 6. Good-quality spare socks. Very practical.

Nina has two more rolls to make, and ends up with a respectable wood axe and her faithful book of travelling tales! Everything she needs for an adventure!

Some Further Considerations...

Abstracted travelling gear is a deliberate design choice in *The One Ring*, which benefits the preservation of mood and theme in Middle-earth adventures. These supplemental descriptions are intended to add flavour. They are not to be considered as an exhaustive or definitive list to be kept track of. They should always add to your games, not become a point of contention.

Any details you create using these tables should add to your character's interactions with the world, their fellows, and their adventures, not detract from the streamlined approach *The One Ring* favours. Nor should you feel limited during an adventure by what you've rolled up.

These are items of note, to aid roleplaying, not an exhaustive, exclusive list of all the items in your travelling gear. An adventurer's pack can happily be considered to contain a few more essentials than generated by these tables. It's all about character.

Feat Die	Rich	Prosperous	Martial	Frugal	Poor
1	Pristine	Solid	Effective	Basic	Well-Worn
2	Exceptional	Reliable	Practical	Simple	Mended
3	The best	Well-made	Handy	Adequate	Second hand
4	Wonderful	Good quality	Workmanlike	Thrifty	Defective
5	Immaculate	Brand new	Trusty	Meagre	Damaged
6	Beautiful	Durable	Plain	Austere	Miserly
7	Decorated	Dependable	Warrior's	Lousy	Rustic
8	Big	Decent	Travelling	Borrowed	Inadequate
9	Fine	Respectable	Useful	Scanty	Old
10	Handsome	Faithful	Hard wearing	Lacking	Make-shift
ᚠ	Lovely	Inspiring	Sturdy	Mean	Sad
	Envy-inducing	Expensive	Sensible	Small	Pitiful

Success Die / Feat Die	1 Camping	2 Clothing	3 Food and Herbs	4 Tools	5 Utensils	6 Fire-making Supplies
1	Ball of Waxed twine	Leather gloves	Leather bag of rye bread	Iron saw	Iron cooking pot	Char Cloth
2	Blanket	Spare hood and cloak	Bag of dried beef	String net	Frying pan	Bag of kindling shavings
3	Wooden pegs	Oiled leather cape	Cloth bag of dried peas	Ball of beeswax	Drinking horn	Tinderbox with firesteel and flint
4	Linen	Fur hat	Bag of dried mushrooms	Book of travelling tales	Birch cup	Wooden box of matches
5	Horsehair bedroll	Woollen hose	Pouch of nettle tea	Iron-shod walking staves	Iron kettle	Iron lantern
6	Rope	Spare socks	Pouch of dried blackberries	Chalk	Wooden bowls	Bag of candles
7	Tent	Leather rain cape	Linen-covered ham	Wood axe	Tin plates	Burning glass
8	Iron pegs	Fur cape	Purse of yarrow for the healing of wounds	Set of work knives	Wooden water flask	Fire bow
9	Pottery oil lamp	Spare boots	Box of salt	Whetstone	Knife and fork	Pipe
10	Roll of oilcloth	Pocket-handkerchief	Pouch of herbs	Hand shovel	Spoon	Bag of Charcoal powder
ᚠ	Iron brazier	Waxed hood	Paper twists of tea leaves	Fishing line	Antler comb	Brass poker
	Wooden poles	Waistcoat	Bag of dried meat	Sticks of charcoal	Ladle	Bottle of spirits

- musical - instruments

"Now for some music!" said Thorin. "Bring out the instruments!"

All the Heroic Cultures of Middle-earth value music and song, which serve as one of their main sources of entertainment, as well as how some folk choose to record their histories. The Rohirrim, for example, have no written language of their own, preserving the tales of their past in songs passed down over many generations. The greatest musical compositions of the Elves have lasted whole Ages, recounting the tales of the legendary heroes of the Elder Days.

The One Ring Roleplaying Game notes that heroes with a **Song** skill level of 1 or more may include a "musical instrument appropriate to their culture" amidst their Travelling Gear. But what might those be, exactly? This section discusses the musical instruments and types of music favoured by the various Free Peoples.

Hobbit Musical Instruments

For a folk that generally prefer quiet lives, Hobbits are very fond of wind instruments that make very loud noises indeed. Trumpets, horns of various shapes and sizes, pipes, and flutes are all readily found where Hobbits are making merry.

Horns are also used to call out warnings of fire and other disasters, for they can sound far over the rolling hills of the Shire. The ringing of bells frequently accompanies Hobbit dances and the taverns of the Shire are certainly no strangers to the sprightly tunes of a fiddle.

Hobbit musical instruments are generally simple affairs, carved from wood or non-precious metals, and built sturdily, for rough handling. That is not to say that a Hobbit musician doesn't value their instrument, just that it goes against their grain to 'put on airs' about something as everyday as music.

Dwarven Musical Instruments

Dwarves value many different sorts of musical instruments, for the sounds of a well-played instrument, whatever its type, can resonate with stone, adding a new dimension to a melody. Loud drums, small flutes, and the merry bowing of fiddles can all accompany the graceful sounds of violins, and the deep voices of the Dwarves, when Durin's Folk make music. Dwarven often speak of their love of beautiful things made by hand, but they also relish working songs, and tavern rattling sing-alongs. Dwarves also enjoy clarinets, an instrument all but unknown among other Free Folk, as their manufacture is exacting and difficult.

Of all instruments, Dwarves consider the harp to be the most noble. Dwarven harps can be treasures unto themselves, some are even formed from intricately carved gold, and set with precious gems. A few are rumoured to be enchanted, capable of tuning themselves, repairing their own strings, and other wonders.

Elven Musical Instruments

Elven minstrels are said to possess the gift to make the things of which they sing appear before the eyes of those that listen. If this gift resides in their voice or in a virtue of the instruments they use to accompany their words no one can truly say. Who has had the chance to listen to their music in a moonlighted glade or in a hall of their folk says that they favour instruments allowing their voices to be heard clearly. Lyres, harps, and graceful viols are common among them, though flutes have their place as well.

The songs of the Elves are widely famed for their beauty, though many are sad to hear, no matter how fair. Many of the other Free Folk sing their own translated versions of Elvish songs, sometimes without even knowing that the original was Elvish, so long has it been sung among them.

As with all things Elvish, their instruments are beautiful and graceful creations. Their wooden instruments can be lavishly carved or appear as if they simply grew into their shape. Their harps are often made of silver, strung with exceedingly fine wire, though some say that their finest harps actually use the hair of Elven maidens for string.

Musical Instruments among Men

The music favoured among Men is as varied as the many Heroic Cultures of that Free Folk. In the north, among the Bardings and the Men of the Lake, they prefer rousing music and boisterous drinking songs, practices that are appreciated by the Dwarves in their midst. Bardings employ drums, horns, lutes, and especially flutes, small perfectly toned versions of which spill out of the famed Dalish musical crackers. Some Men of Lake like to keep one or two exotic sounding instruments from far away Dorwinion, Rhûn, or even distant Harad.

The Woodmen and the Beornings use large drums and rattles, accompanied by wooden flutes and small harps. Their music tends to be more sombre, though at great celebrations the thunder of the drums can rattle the foothills of the Misty Mountains.

In the West, the Men of Bree are in accord with their Hobbit neighbours, though their favour fiddles over wind instruments. The Dúnedain, by and large, carry no musical instruments that are not small and easily portable, so small flutes are the most common instrument among them.

In the south the Rohirrim are famed for their singing, both at leisure and when they go to war. The swift sons of Eorl sing from horseback when they kill, which is no time for musical instruments. But in their halls, their minstrels play bright harps, small drums, and martial horns.

The Eorlingas also use an instrument which consists of a staff set with iron rings they stamp against the floor in time with their music, create a ringing accompaniment to their songs.

The Dunlendings use a variety of drums and flutes, in their wild sounding music. In Minas Tirith, the folk of Gondor value harps, violins, and horns. Their music varies from the martial, to ancient Elvish songs that they still sing in their original form, preserved from of old.

- But what has it got in its - pocketses, eh?

A player might wish to answer Bilbo's riddle: what do they have in their pockets or at the bottom of their packs? The answer might reveal something about the character's personality, give you further hooks from which to hang a backstory, or supply some material for your Loremaster's later use.

In my pocket there is a:

(first rolling a Success die)

1-2 Shiny

(roll the Success die twice)

1: Brass	1: Ring
2: Gold	2: Button
3: Iron	3: Tassel (for a hood)
4: Tin	4: Penny
5: Glass	5: Pin
6: Silver	6: Spoon

3-4 Curious

(roll the Success die twice)

1: Stone	1: Bead
2: Ivory	2: Toggle
3: Horn	3: Charm
4: Bone	4: Talisman
5: Wooden	5: Carving
6: Amber	6: Disc

5-6 Useful

(roll the Success die once)

1: Whistle
2: Key
3: Pocket knife
4: Pipe
5: Piece of string
6: Tooth pick

Then roll a success die again:

1: given to me

(roll a success die)

1: by a friend
2: long ago
3: by a parent
4: by a sibling
5: by a wise old woman/man
6: by fate

2: which I found

(roll a success die)

1: at home
2: on the Road
3: in a cave
4: by the river
5: in the crook of a tree
6: as a child

3: which I keep

(roll a success die)

1: for luck
2: to ward off evil
3: in case
4: for a rainy day
5: because of its story
6: for the memories

4: from

(roll a success die)

1: home
2: Dale
3: Gondor
4: Old Fornost
5: the Ancient Days
6: the Far South

5: made by

(roll a success die)

1: Dwarves
2: Elves
3: Wild Men
4: Giants
5: my grandfather
6: my people

6: Which is precious to me because

(roll a success die)

1: it was a birthday present
2: I've always had it
3: it reminds me of home
4: it was my mother's
5: I only just found it
6: I won it

Example: Paul's Beorning Slayer, Odo, is setting out on the road. Paul decides he'd like to know what Odo keeps in his belt pouch. He rolls a Success Die, scoring 3 – Curious. He rolls again getting another 3 – Horn. Another roll gives Paul a 5 – carving. A curious horn carving. He rolls another success die, scoring 5 - "made by". He rolls again, scoring 4. "giants". What does Odo have in his belt pouch? A curious horn carving made by giants. How did it come into his possession? Perhaps some time on the road will reveal the answer!

part five
for reference

- call to arms -

Those who would stand against the Shadow know perils as no others and their lives are filled, all too often, with sword days and desperate fights. The following steps summarize the combat sequence in *The One Ring Roleplaying Game*. Page numbers refer to *The One Ring Roleplaying Game*, unless otherwise specified.

The Loremaster considers whether the company may be surprised or whether they are attacking and can take their foes unawares.

If the company is ambushed, all companions generally make an **Awareness** test against a TN 14 – though this could be a **Battle** or **Hunting** test depending on circumstances. Companions who fail the test are surprised, cannot make a roll for combat advantage Success dice, and are not allowed to make opening volleys. A player-hero can warn one other companion on a great success and two on an extraordinary success. Warned characters count as if they had succeeded at the initial test. (pages 167-168)

If at least half the heroes in the company are not surprised, they count as defending in terms of determining initiative and combat advantages. If more than half failed, they count as if they are attacking. (Page 168)

If the company has a chance to ambush their opponents, they will generally use **Battle**, **Hunting**, or **Stealth** tests against a TN 14. All characters must succeed for an ambush to be successful. Characters who succeed with either a great or extraordinary success can help (respectively) one or two fellows that failed their roll. (pages 168 and 170)

If successful, the attacking companions hold the initiative and their surprised foes will not get opening volleys. If they fail, the fight's onset is resolved normally, with defending enemies holding the initiative. (page 170)

Generally, if the company is defending, they hold the initiative. If the company is attacking and failed to ambush their foes, their enemies will hold the initiative.

The company now makes **Battle** preliminary skill rolls to determine combat advantage dice and the order of combat. If the company has initiative, they roll against a Target Number 14 and they act first. If not, they roll against a TN 18 and their enemies act first. An ordinary success grants 1 Success die, a great success 2, and an extraordinary success 3. Unused Success dice are discarded when the combat is over. (pages 151 and 170)

Combatants now resolve opening volleys. Surprised foes lose out on their chance to make an opening volley. Normally only one spear or one bow attack can be made, though depending on circumstances, a Loremaster may allow two bow attacks. The Target Number of all volleys is 12 + the target's Parry rating. All targets' shield modifiers are doubled if they are aware of the volley. (page 171)

Fighters on horseback now resolve their charges. First, companions make a Riding test using **Athletics** against a TN 16, modified by their mount's Riding modifier. If the test is successful, they get to make an attack on a target of their choice. If they fail the riding roll, no attack is possible. A charging attack has a TN 12 + the target's Parry rating. The Charge bonus, if any, of a rider's mount is added to the damage of a successful attack. (For more on mounted combat see Horse-lords of Rohan – pages 135-138)

The company may, at this point, choose to spend 1 Fellowship point and take on combat roles for the duration of the fight. Combat roles will give them access to special combat role advantages. (See page 105 of this guide.)

Combat Stances:

Stance	Combat TN	Order of action	Notes	Description
Forward	6	1	Close combat	Exploiting any opportunity to attack, to the point of exposing yourself to the retaliation of your enemies.
Open	9	2	Close combat	Fighting without sparing yourself, but giving proper attention to your enemies' actions.
Defensive	12	3	Close combat	Fighting conservatively, trying to protect yourself or others and holding your ground.
Rearward*	12	4	Ranged combat	Staying away from the press, to attack your foes from a distance.

*There must be two others characters fighting in a close combat stance for each character assuming a rearward stance. (see Ranged Combat Stance: Rearward, on the following page).

Characters declare their combat stances. Combat stances determine what actions a character can take in combat, and give the base Target Number for a companion to both strike and be struck by their enemies in turn. (page 175)

Characters in Forward stance have a Base TN 6 and act first in combat. In addition to close combat attacks, they may use the Intimidate Foe, Challenge Adversary, or Two-weapon Attack combat tasks. (page 179 and pages 107-108 of this guide.)

Characters in Open stance have a Base TN 9 and act second in combat. In addition to close combat attacks, they may use the Rally Comrades, Enhearten Comrades, or Sudden Attack combat tasks. (page 179 and pages 108-109 of this guide.)

Characters in Defensive stance have a Base TN 12 and act third in combat. In addition to close combat attacks, they may use the Protect Companion, Full Defense, or Stand Ground combat tasks. (page 180 and page 109 of this guide.)

Characters in Rearward stance have a Base TN 12 and act fourth in combat. Characters in Rearward stance can only make ranged attacks. In addition to their ranged attacks, they may use the Prepare Shot, Harry Foes, or Seek a Mark combat tasks. Note that a character can only take Rearward stance if at least two of their fellows are fighting in close combat to defend them ***and*** the total number of enemies being fought is less than twice the number of characters in the company. (page 173, 180 and 149 of this guide.)

All characters usually have the option to attempt other non-combat tasks and use the Escape Combat task instead of attacking. (Page 180)

Once stances have been declared, if their enemies outnumber the company, the Loremaster assigns their foes to various companions. If the companions outnumber (or equal) their foes, they get to pick their targets. Up to 3 companions can engage a human-sized foe, up to 5 can in the case of a larger than human foe, such as a Troll. (page 174-175) Note that the Loremaster's choices may be partially directed by combat roles if the companions are outnumbered. (See page 106 of this guide.)

Attacks are now resolved for the side with initiative. (page 175)

The Target Number to strike a foe in combat, for heroes and adversaries alike, is equal to the hero's stance's Combat Target number + their foe's Parry rating and any shield modifiers. (page 175)

If an attack is successful, it deals an amount of Endurance loss based on the quality of the roll, with possible modifications due to the attacker's Damage bonus. A success causes an Endurance loss equal to the damage rating of the weapon being used. A great success adds on the Damage rating of the attacking hero. Finally, an extraordinary success adds on double the Damage rating of the attacking hero. (page 176)

If the Feat die rolled during a successful attack is equal to or higher than the Edge rating of the weapon being used, the target additionally suffers a Piercing Blow and must make a Protection test to avoid being Wounded in the case of a companion or slain if a Loremaster character. The Protection test is made with a Feat die and a number of Success dice from any armour worn + any helmet modifiers. The Target Number is equal to the Injury rating of the weapon the attacker used. On a failure, a companion is Wounded, whereas an enemy combatant dies. Characters can spend a point of Hope to invoke an Attribute bonus (Body) on Protection tests. (page 178)

A companion that expects to be severely injured by a blow can choose to be "knocked back" by it. Such a character halves the Endurance loss caused by a successful attack, but spends the following round recovering, unable to do anything else, including changing Stance. (page 177)

A companion can choose to remove a helm in order to immediately lower their Fatigue score by 3 points as a free action; however, they immediately lose the helm's Protection bonus. (page 177)

Companions can choose to make a called shot to try and trigger a special effect.. A called shot must beat the Target Number for the attack and produce at least a ᛏ on one of the Success dice. (page 178 and page 110 of this guide.)

Once all attackers have gone, combat then proceeds with the combatants without initiative attacking. (page 175)

Combat continues till one side or the other is defeated by death, surrender, or fleeing the battlefield.

Dynamic Combats

One of the great narrative strengths of combat in *The One Ring Roleplaying Game* is the open nature of the Combat Stances. What each stance looks like on the battlefield is purposefully sketched out only in very broad terms, specifically so Players (and Loremasters) have a wide latitude in describing how they move and attack. Use the terrain to inform your descriptions, both in normal attacks and defense, but especially when using Success dice gained from combat advantage. Say an oak tree with a massive root structure dominates the battlefield. A companion in the Forward stance may say they attack by leaping down at their foe from the top of one of the largest roots, whereas a hero in a Defensive stance might describe ducking between roots to allow the thick bark to take a blow meant for them.

If a companion "warns" another, don't just say so, describe how! The Elf swiftly yanks the unaware Barding behind a tree as a brigand patrol passes. As the Beorning falters he breaks a small branch, but the Hobbit deftly chucks a rock at a nearby rabbit and its startled flight draws the Orc sentry's attention away from the stumbling Beorning.

Try to avoid making simple declarative statements often, e.g. "I hit the Orc. I kill the Troll." Instead, tailor your action descriptions so that they can be added to once you know the result of the dice being rolled.

"The Warden leaps forward, a snarl on her lips, sword raised high... (roll dice, determining the blow is a great success)...and sweeps her mighty blade across the Uruk's chest!"

"The Dwarf charges at the bandit leader, axe at the ready... (roll dice, the attack misses)...but the rogue sidesteps the Dwarf's swift cuts."

Not every combat action needs an extended description, but if everyone at the table tries for 1 in 3, you will find combats swiftly become a lot more exciting.

- the Road Beckons -

So your company is setting out on a Journey across Middle-earth, an all too often perilous and trying endeavour that is not for the faint of heart. The following steps offer an easy summary of how to make that Journey in *The One Ring Roleplaying Game*. All page numbers refer to that volume.

Choose your company's destination and plot your route on the Adventurer's Map. (see page 18)

Assign each companion their role for the Journey. There can be only one Guide, but multiple individuals can take on any one of the other three roles—Scouts, Huntsmen and Look-out Men. (see page 154)

Make preliminary **Lore** skill rolls against a TN 14 to acquire bonus Success dice to use on **Travel** rolls, or any tasks or tests directly related to your Journey. An ordinary success grants one Success die, a great success two, and an extraordinary success three. Unused Success dice are discarded when the Journey is over. (see page 151)

Will the Journey be entirely on foot or will ponies and/or horses be utilized? This can both speed the Journey and lower potential Fatigue. Does the Journey follow any rivers, possibly allowing boats to be used? (see pages 158 and 160)

Show the Loremaster the company's route, explaining how the companions prepare for their trip. What season are they travelling in? Winter and autumn gear has an Encumbrance rating of 3, whereas summer and spring gear has an Encumbrance rating of 2. Note that this Encumbrance rating only affects Fatigue gained on Journeys. (see pages 77 and 159)

Will the Journey only take a few days? The Loremaster may choose to simply narrate the trip without using the full Journey rules. Will the Journey take longer than a week or cross multiple terrain types? The Loremaster may choose to break the Journey into separate legs.

The Loremaster uses his maps to determine distance, terrain being traversed, and how long the Journey will take based on the speed of the method of travel utilized. (see pages 157 and 158)

The Loremaster narrates the course of the company's Journey, noting some of the terrain they cross and various events along the way. Some members of a company may be able to work on personal goals as they travel. On the road, a hero can attempt a maximum of two die rolls (generally Tasks) each day.

The number of Fatigue tests to be made during a Journey (or each leg) is based on the Season in which it is made. Companions make Fatigue tests by rolling their **Travel** skill against a Target Number determined by the Loremaster. The standard is TN 14, but the Loremaster may choose to alter the TN based on the Region being crossed. One does not lightly travel into Shadow lands... (see pages 158 and 159)

Each test a companion fails, their Fatigue score is immediately increased by the Encumbrance value of their travelling gear, reduced by 1 if they are travelling with ponies or horses or on a boat. Normally all of the tests are taken at once, but a Loremaster may choose to space out when and how the tests are made or Fatigue is gained, especially on a long Journey with multiple legs. (see page 159)

Any **Travel** roll that produces an , regardless of whether the test was failed or not, causes a Hazard episode to occur, which means multiple Hazards are possible. (see pages 159-162)

For each Hazard episode, the Loremaster rolls a Feat die to determine which role is targeted, and possibly another Feat die to determine the consequences for failure. The Loremaster then describes an appropriate Hazard and narrates the potential consequences should the companions fail to meet its challenge. If no character was assigned to the targeted role, the test fails automatically. This fate can be avoided by any companion choosing to spend a point of Hope to be assigned to the role and thus taking on the challenge brought about by the Hazard episode. Any hero may also spend a Hope point to join in a challenge, even if someone else is already assigned to the role (though there can only be one Guide). The difficulty of all such skill rolls is or may vary according to the region traversed. Generally the companion that takes the test faces the consequences if they fail—though some failures could affect the entire company. (see page 161)

The company arrives at their destination, hopefully not too much the worse for wear!

Along the Way

The key to enjoying the Journey rules to the fullest is not to reduce them to mere mechanics, but to explore and describe the narrative of the various rolls made along the way. This task doesn't just fall to the Loremaster, but to the players as well. Suggest elements that can be incorporated into Journey descriptions and build your own portrayals based on what the Loremaster has introduced.

Instead of regarding your great success on a preliminary Lore check only as 'two Success dice to use for whatever', tell your companions what those dice represent as you use them. For example, Eutaric pulls out a letter he received as a boy from his well-traveled uncle, containing useful information on the traversed region; Primrose smiles as she puffs away at the Longbottom Leaf she wisely kept specifically for the trip; Beli notices that Sigeric is sagging a bit and offers him a long pull from a flask of good spirits to ward off the mountain's cold (the Dwarf gave the Beorning one of his preliminary Success dice). You can apply this same practice to your Travel rolls as well: A series of successes has a Dwarf player noting how her hero stumps on at the same pace, day in and day out, seemingly untouched by weariness. Another could describe the Fatigue brought on by one or two bad Travel rolls as a lack of rest due to troubling dreams caused by memories of a particularly harrowing battle the entire company remembers vividly.

- taking counsel -

Companions will converse with many folk in the course of their adventures without needing to make any die rolls, but when something is to be gained or lost in a meeting with a Loremaster character, then a formal encounter may be called for. The following steps summarize the encounter system.

Determine what the company hopes to achieve from the encounter. Do they want something from a Loremaster character? Do they only wish to make a good impression? Does a Loremaster character wish something from them?

Make preliminary **Insight** skill rolls against a TN 14 to acquire bonus Success dice to use during the introduction and interaction phases of the encounter. An ordinary success grants one Success die, a great success two, and an extraordinary success three. Unused Success dice are discarded when the encounter is over (see page 151).

The Loremaster determines the Tolerance rating. The Tolerance rating of an encounter sets how many rolls can be failed by the companions before an encounter is effectively over. While an encounter may technically continue from a story perspective after the Tolerance rating has been exceeded, nothing more can actually be achieved (see pages 188 and 189).

The basic Tolerance level is generally equal to the highest Valour or Wisdom in the company, depending on the Loremaster character's preferences. This is modified by the highest Standing rating among the companions if one or more of them comes from the same culture as the Loremaster character(s). Additional modifiers may apply based on existing prejudices and the company's actions. The minimum Tolerance rating is 1 (see pages 188 and 189).

The company determines how they should introduce themselves. Player-heroes who could reasonably know about or have had a chance to inquire about the individual(s) they are soon to meet can take **Lore** tests to determine what would be the most proper way to go about their introductions. Some Loremaster characters expect individual introductions, while others expect to deal with a single spokesperson for the whole company (see pages 185-187).

A single spokesperson can choose to use **Awe**, **Courtesy**, **Riddle** or sometimes **Song** depending on what they wish to convey to the Loremaster character about the company and their intentions (see pages 186-187).

Individual speakers generally use **Courtesy**, though other skill tests are possible. A failed **Courtesy** roll effectively removes that individual as an active participant from the rest of the encounter, as the Loremaster character regards them as uncouth and ignores them (see page 186).

If the company only intended to make an impression, the rest of the encounter may no longer need tests and can simply be roleplayed at this point; however, if the company or Loremaster character had other distinct goals, all move into the interaction part of the encounter.

During the interaction, player-heroes use various skills to communicate their intentions and to try to discern those of the Loremaster character(s). Common skills used for this include **Insight**, **Inspire**, **Persuade**, **Riddle** and **Song**. Various traits can come in useful here (see pages 187-188).

Characters who failed to introduce themselves properly cannot directly affect a Loremaster character during the interaction phase. But they can still make **Insight** or **Riddle** rolls to determine beneficial information and can pass any preliminary Success dice they still have to active participants as needed (see page 151 and 187).

An optional rule that has found use in all the printed adventures for *The One Ring Roleplaying Game* has the Loremaster keeping track of all successful rolls made by the company that directly affected the Loremaster character(s) being encountered. The number of successful rolls then indicates the overall "success" of the encounter (see page 189).

When the Tolerance rating is exceeded, or either the Loremaster character or the company has achieved their aim, the encounter draws to a close.

Armour:

Armour	Encumbrance	Protection	Type
Leather shirt	4	1d	Leather armour
Leather corslet	8	2d	Leather armour
Mail-shirt	12	3d	Mail armour
Coat of mail	16	4d	Mail armour
Mail hauberk	20	5d	Mail armour
Cap of iron and leather	2	+1	Headgear
Helm*	6	+4	Headgear

*May be removed in combat to lower Fatigue by 3 points

Weapons:

Weapon	Damage	Edge	Injury	Enc	Group	Notes
Dagger	3	P	12	0	-	-
Short sword	5	10	14	1	Swords	-
Sword	5	10	16	2	Swords	-
Long sword	5 (1h) / 7 (2h)	10	16 (1h) / 18 (2h)	3	Swords	It can be used with one or two hands. The Damage and Injury entries list two separate ratings.
Spear	5	9	14	2	Spears	Can be thrown
Great spear (2h)	9	9	16	4	Spears	Two-handed weapon. It cannot be thrown
Axe	5	P	18	2	Axes	-
Great axe (2h)	9	P	20	4	Axes	Two-handed weapon
Long-hafted axe	5 (1h) / 7 (2h)	P	18 (1h) / 20 (2h)	3	Axes	It can be used with one or two hands. The Damage and Injury entries list two separate ratings.
Bow	5	10	14	1	Bows	Ranged weapon
Great bow	7	10	16	3	Bows	Ranged weapon
Mattock (2h)	8	10	18	3	-	Two-handed weapon

Shields

Shields	Encumbrance	Parry Modifier
Buckler	1	+1
Shield	3	+2
Great shield	5	+3

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